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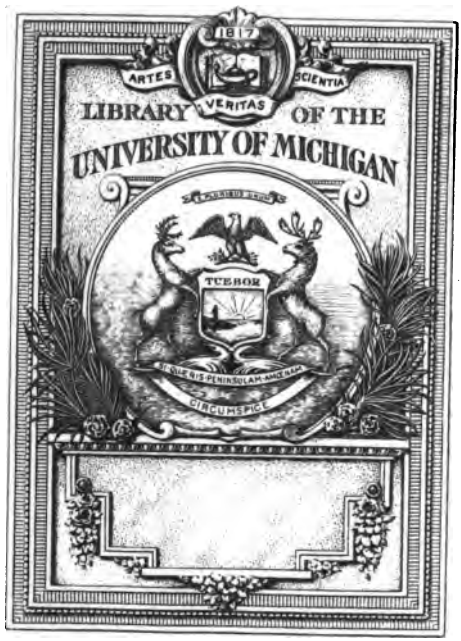

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The Contribution of Christian Experience to the System of Evangelical Doctrine

BY

FRANK HUGH FOSTER, Ph. D., D.D.

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE PACIFIC THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO

Fleming H. Revell Company

Publishers of Evangelical Literature

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PREFACE

MANY years ago I saw in a shop window in Göttingen a book with the title: "System of Christian Certainty". I did not read it; but the title proved the fruitful seed of a course of thought which led me into substantial agreement with its author, F. H. R. Frank. Subsequently I embodied the results of my reflection in an article in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for 1883 under the title: "The Argument from Christian Experience to the Inspiration of the Bible". When, therefore, I was honored by Princeton Theological Seminary with an invitation to deliver a course of lectures upon the Stone foundation, I turned naturally to this long followed line of thought as constituting my present message to my times.

It has not been my purpose to present the subject exhaustively or minutely. Besides the limitation of time which would have prevented this, the courtesies of the occasion as a doctrinal discussion by a member of one school of theology in the representative institution of another school forbade the introduction of matters upon which considerable divergence of view might have developed. Hence no attempt has been made to as-

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certain the testimony of experience to a large number of theological theories upon which it doubtless has something to say. The general reader will find this to accrue to his advantage. It has, no doubt, also assisted to lift the discussion upon higher planes and to give it greater breadth.

With still greater emphasis I desire to say that it has not been my intention either here or anywhere to advocate experience as a substitute for the Scriptures as a source of Christian doctrine, to lift it to the chief place as the primary source, or to make exclusive claims for it of any sort. Personally I prefer the experiential method of introducing the study of Systematic Theology and employ it in my own instruction as, upon the whole, the best; but I do not deny that other methods of approach are legitimate, nor that they have certain advantages which must be surrendered to gain the greater advantages of the experiential approach.

What I have positively sought to do is to promote the accurate study of Christian experience. Under the name of the Christian consciousness it has received great attention of recent years, but most that has been said about it has been so careless and vague as to be of little value. It should be treated with accuracy, as it may be.

Two incidental services I have sought to render. One is the development in a new form of the old Protestant argument for the Scriptures from the " Testimony of the Spirit ". It is, I be-

lieve, an argument peculiarly suited to meet the difficulties of the present day. I call attention to it in order to solicit searching examination of its validity and scope. If it can be invalidated, this will be a service to Christian thinking. If it cannot, it will remain a bulwark of faith in the questionings of our day. Then again, I have sought to secure by theoretical discussion and to exhibit by practical examples the true place of church history in the determination of the voice of experience. The results of a critical history of doctrine have their place among the materials of Christian doctrine. The current histories of doctrine do not seem to be aware, for the most part, that there are any such things as "results" of their work; and few, if any, modern attempts to construct systems of doctrine make any distinct use of historical materials. Even Principal Fairbairn in his great book, admirably furnished as he is with historical knowledge, has been unable in the constructive part of his work to use the materials he has collected and himself augmented in the historical part. But the history of Christian doctrine should not be a collection of mere annals: it should be a genetic history tracing the true development of the Christian system; and its results ought not to be a collection of learned lumber, but materials for assisting men and ascertaining the mind of the Spirit and the truth of God. Thomasius remains almost alone as an historian of the higher aspects of Christian doc-

trine. He ought to have a successor who could in our day take the additional material brought together by the labors of Harnack and his school and draw the lessons of history in a form to be used by the Christian thinker. It has been my hope to do something to inspire and guide such an undertaking.

The lectures, after delivery at Princeton, were repeated at Crozer Theological Seminary (Baptist), Chester, Pa., and at the United College (Congregational), Bradford, England. Lecture V. was repeated at Hartford Theological Seminary (Congregational).

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LECTURE I

INTRODUCTORY

EVANGELICAL doctrine constitutes a true system. Theologies, of course, are systematic, for it is their great purpose to adjust Christian doctrines to one another, to explain their mutual relations, and to defend them before the bar of all human reason. The distinction is made between theology and doctrine, by which the former term designates the element of explanation and adjustment, the latter the element of fact which has thus to be explained. Doctrine is then in a degree independent of the particular theology which a man may hold, just as the observed facts of the heavens will be the same whether the astronomer hold the Ptolemaic or the Copernican system of theoretical astronomy. It is true that the view of the facts themselves will be facilitated or hindered by the theory of their relations which any observer may hold; and hence it must be admitted that the distinction here drawn between theology and doctrine is not one which can be carried through with the accuracy with which we may speak of distinction between fact and theory in biology. But in a degree the distinction is true, and useful; and em-

ploying it for what it is worth, it is the purpose of this course of lectures to direct itself rather to the doctrine than to the theology of Christianity, and to discuss the contribution which has been made in the construction of the doctrinal system by experience.

When it is affirmed that there is a system in evangelical doctrine, it is meant that the doctrines of Christianity fall easily into an order of mutual dependency and consistency. Given one or two of the leading features of this system, the rest follow at once. Break the system by denial at any principal point, and you will have subsequent denial at others or at all, if the thinker proceeds in a logical manner. It is further meant that the system is the same in all the great aggressive and fruitful churches of the centuries, and that, wherever it has been held in varying degrees by them, their degree of loyalty to it, and to the Bible as its source, has been the measure of their fruitfulness. Christendom is by no means one in its theologies; and, were we to discuss them, we should find ourselves carried far from experience into regions of speculation and of debate often remote from the actual life of any church. But as the earth, which is viewed by different men in different ways as they consider it from the point of view of the artist, the scientist, or the plain man of affairs who has to wrest his living from it, is nevertheless the common home of us all and carries us in its motherly bosom without

much regard to our differing affection or our schemes of exploitation, so there is a broad underlying system of Christian doctrine, which sustains us all, in which we have our home, and to which every biblical Christian is bound by the ties of an experiential connection. Its influences have descended into his very bone and marrow; and as apprehended truth, it has largely proceeded out of the solemn processes of the soul when this has been breathed upon by the Divine Spirit and has felt within itself the motions of a new life. It is a great universal human fact; not, it is true, in the sense that all men indiscriminately know it or appreciate it, but in the sense that in every age it has guided a multitude of souls from darkness to light and from the power of sin into the liberty of the children of God. It is this underlying and all-sustaining body of common Christian faith, found in all lands, in all ages, and among the diverse conditions of universal humanity, and everywhere the same, that is the object of our present study.

It will be presupposed, without special effort at justification, that experience has contributed to this body of doctrine. Historically speaking, experience has given birth to various doctrines, as to that which is the foundation of our Protestant system. When Luther taught that the believing sinner is freely forgiven simply for Christ's sake, it was because such had been his own experience, the fulness of the evangelical method of salvation

receiving emphasis from the poverty and ineffectiveness of methods of meriting salvation exhaustively tested by him through long months. Yet the purpose of our present study is not primarily historical. We shall be concerned mainly with the logical contribution of experience to the system, with what it can contribute rather than with what it has contributed, with endeavoring to ascertain, first, what Christian experience really is, and then what naturally flows from it in the way of fundamental views as to God, man, and salvation. Experience has to do with facts, but it is also a fact in itself. Men have always argued from it to certain conclusions. Our question now is, how justly have they argued, and what, in all its circumference, does experience really teach. Restricted as the discussion will be by the brief hours of these few lectures, it may be that some substantial answer can be made to that question.

The time seems peculiarly ripe for such a study. The old century now just closing, has been characterized by a series of strenuous efforts to deepen theology and bring to it the proof drawn from the newly opened fountain of the specifically Christian life. These efforts were begun by Schleiermacher who stands at the dividing point of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and who became the agency by which a passage was effected from the dry and shallow unbelief of the former into the enlarging and deepening earnestness of the latter. He found Chris-

tianity confounded with the things of the world, a prey to small philosophies and flippant criticisms, an object of rejection and of contempt to men who supposed themselves to have risen by means of their high education far above it, but who had never in fact drunk of the waters of genuine culture, and were ignorant of the real meaning of what they despised. He sought, therefore, to set forth Christianity in its distinctive essence and character; and he made this to consist in an experience, in a consciousness, the immediate consciousness of God, designated by him the "feeling of dependence." This feeling, when the soul lay passively open to all the in-streaming influences of the universe, became "absolute," that is, unmodified by any feeling of corresponding power and mastery on the soul's part; and thus the soul felt God. This, said Schleiermacher, was the central and vital point of the Christian life, and in view of it every doctrine of the Christian system had to be formulated. His "System of Faith" was therefore principally an attempt to restate the traditional doctrines of orthodoxy under the guidance of this principle.

The defects of Schleiermacher as a theologian are too well understood to require any prolonged review at this time. He did not succeed fully in emancipating himself from the pantheism which almost necessarily follows from his form of conceiving of the ultimate Christian consciousness. His Christology provides neither for the pre-ex-

istence nor the sinless perfection of Christ. His view of the Scriptures reduces them to the position of a secondary testimony to the truth, the primary being always afforded by consciousness. With such great determinative defects his discussions of the subordinate themes could not prove successful. But his positive affirmations furnished the problem and determined the course of subsequent theology to a very large degree. He maintained religion's independence of both morals and philosophy, and thus claimed for theology a sphere of its own in which it was to be unhampered by the antagonisms of any other form of culture whatever,—in our own day, that is, of scientific and even historical criticism. Christian truth authenticates itself on Schleiermacher's basis, because it is at bottom a matter of immediate consciousness. He spiritualized also the conception of faith by making it essentially the immediate communion of the soul with God. He distinguished between faith and the faith, between the saving attitude of the soul and the forms of intellectual conception of the truth embodied in the dogmas and creeds of the church. And yet, while thus emphasizing the spiritual and ethical, he did not forget the historical elements of Christianity, for he laid a new emphasis upon the historical Christ, and by his practical attitude toward the New Testament and his more sensible methods of exegesis did much to overcome objections to the gospels which had accumulated during the

rationalistic epoch. In a word, he changed the entire aspect of the dispute between belief and unbelief, and introduced a new era of faith by exhibiting to men the certainty of spiritual verities now illuminated before their spiritual vision and made vivid to their reawakened susceptibilities.

Schleiermacher was followed by a series of men who in various ways took up the problem he set and sought to bring it to a more satisfactory solution. One of these was Thomasius, the historian and dogmatician of Erlangen. His distinguishing characteristic was a deep and ardent devotion to his divine Master, so that, as has been often remarked by different pupils and readers, intercourse with him made "the heart burn" within one, much as did the hearts of the disciples on the way to Emmaus. He was more influenced in the department of formal reasoning by Hegel than by Schleiermacher. His "History of Dogmas" bristles with Hegelian terminology and perhaps distorts the true course of events somewhat to meet the demands of the Hegelian method. But from Schleiermacher he derived the great principle that theology flows out of life, that Christian faith comes first, introducing the man into a new realm of experience, and that then, and only then, is he led by the demands of the mind for an intellectual understanding of these experiences as well as by the necessity of defending his faith before opposition and of explaining it to the inquirer, to the successive for-

mulation of one principle of doctrine after another. Christian history passes through a genuinely logical development, according to Thomasius—this was the Hegelian element,—but this development is the constantly advancing appropriation of the truth by the church under the teaching of the indwelling Spirit—this is the Schleiermacherian element, made more correct and evangelical than Schleiermacher had made it by the greater definiteness of Thomasius' conception of the fundamental Christian consciousness.

Thomasius was followed at Erlangen by Frank who may be called pre-eminently the experiential theologian of the century. He followed Schleiermacher in maintaining a distinct sphere for religion, and in reducing it to one fundamental element, a matter also of ultimate consciousness and hence of immediate certainty, not a mere feeling or a passive consciousness, but an act, the determinative act of Christian committal of one's self to the Redeemer, the act of faith. Upon this he built up a "System of Christian Certainty," which embraced in successive degrees of diminishing immediacy the "immanent" facts of sin and forgiveness, the "transcendent" objects of faith, God and Christ, and the "transeunt" objects, the church and the world. In this system the main doctrines of Christian theology are established by a process of logical development from the facts involved in the New Birth; whereupon Frank proceeds to construct

his " System of Christian Truth," in which the main positions are assumed to have been already proved in the " Certainty," and the effort is made to bring them into their proper relations and to set them forth with the requisite fulness. Of this system in its two parts it is not necessary to speak now at length, since the discussions of the subsequent lectures begin at the same point and agree with Frank's main results. In a word the two " Systems " may be summarized as a resolute and elaborate attempt to found Christian theology upon experience as its sole and sufficient basis.

But it must not be supposed that this line of developing orthodoxy following the great principles suggested by Schleiermacher has been permitted to hold undisputed possession of the field. The most virile and influential theological movement in Germany, itself also building on Schleiermacher and on Kant, has contested the methods and the results of the orthodox experiential school. I refer to the school of Ritschl. Ritschl was himself a theologian of the Christian experience, only, in distinction from Frank and also from Schleiermacher, he took his stand on the collective experience of the Christian community, apart from which, in his deep aversion from mediæval pietism, he was prepared to admit no genuine experience. This collective experience he saw embodied in the New Testament, and was accordingly primarily an exegetical theologian,

though his exegesis was often arbitrary and marred by the controlling influence of certain ideas. Still he remained an experiential theologian. His eye was ever directed to the Christian life, and he judged the value of every dogmatic proposition by its "interest" to the Christian, that is, by its tendency to promote that life. His defects, which were many, and which will necessarily find frequent discussion in the following hours, arose from two principal reasons, from his failure to understand the fundamental fact of experience, the New Birth, and from the overwhelmingly apologetic tendency of his theological labors. He failed to understand the person and sacrifice of Christ because he failed to comprehend the work of regeneration in each individual soul. And he felt the objections against miracles, the trinity, the incarnation, and other doctrines so keenly that he was constantly tempted to meet these by declaring the doctrines irrelevant, pertaining to matters of no "interest," and hence outside the true sphere of the theologian. He thus failed to give attention to many of the great conditions lying underneath facts of the Christian life, without which these facts cannot be. But he uttered with what power these detractions left him his plea for the independent sphere of theology and for the reality and incomparable significance among human phenomena of the Christian life.

Ritschl has now given place to Kaftan, Profes-

sor of Theology in the University of Berlin, who possesses an equal importance in the theological world, and is the leading present representative of the general theological position originated by Ritschl. He also is a theologian of experience. In his early professional life he occupied much the same position as Frank, but has now abandoned it. Like Ritschl he lays great emphasis upon revelation as the source of Christian theology. Yet he speaks perpetually of the Christian faith (*Glaube*) and of what is held by it, and he even conducts his discussion of theology in the "*Dogmatik*" so as largely to avoid formal proof, adducing as evidence that such and such a position is the Christian position only the somewhat vague suggestion that it is the deliverance of this "faith." Faith comes from revelation, which is the personal contact of the divine Spirit with the human and from which the obedient soul, thus coming to know God personally, gains a knowledge of truth. In other words, the Christian life is a definite thing, leading naturally in the case of every true believer to distinct general views of truth, based upon a definite understanding of the Bible, which views it is the task of theology to set forth in their purity and general consistency, untrammeled by the artificial shackles of a worldly and false philosophy.

The movement begun by Schleiermacher and continued by many other theologians besides the ones whose names have been so briefly men-

tioned here, has thus endured to the present time. A quantity of rich material has been gathered which ought to be available for theology. A number of misleading by-ways have been designated and pitfalls have been marked. It may be that something better can now be done than has yet been done to define precisely and to use intelligently for theological purposes the rich treasure of the accumulated Christian experience of nineteen centuries. Indeed, the last named representative of the experiential theology, Kaftan, seems to be of this opinion, for he introduces his own work by a criticism of his predecessors, devoting at one point brief but trenchant criticism to Frank. Frank, he says, teaches that the Christian gains a certainty as to his faith quite parallel to that which he has as to the facts of the natural consciousness, and that dogma then enters the arena of discussion as the production of the Christian church by normal and necessary Christian processes from the facts of its faith. Now, says Kaftan, this method cannot withstand criticism, for it cannot compel assent, since the facts of experience upon which it bases its argument are not accessible to every one; and then, it has no "principle," as he styles it, or fundamental and germinal idea out of which everything flows. This criticism we may dismiss at once by saying that "compulsion" belongs to mathematics and not to theology, even Kaftan failing to "compel" many, for he does not seem to lack critics.

As to the "principle," Frank thought he had one in the New Birth, and it may be possible to show that he was right. But Kaftan pushes his criticism further still. His most serious objection to Frank's method, probably furnishing the decisive reason why he himself abandoned it, is that dogma does not in fact arise in the way supposed. Frank does not truly work from a sound basis by legitimate processes to a sound result, and that result the dogma of the church; but he presupposes the dogma, and could never guide the course of his argument as he does, were not this goal consciously in his eye from the first. Kaftan stigmatizes this attitude as "Catholic," or as we put it in English, Romanizing, since it erects the formulated dogma into a mysterious "object of piety." Dogma is not "the common expression by the church, through formal act, of the contents of its faith," as Thomasius had phrased it, but is derived in Kaftan's view from philosophy. The "supernatural guidance of the Holy Ghost" in the formulation of dogma is an illusion. They who defend this view can neither explain the gap yawning between the New Testament and the earliest beginnings of dogma-making, nor tell why they reject the further labors of the eighteenth century rationalists, who proceeded by the same laws and in the same direction as their orthodox predecessors. It remains, says Kaftan, that the church dogmas as such are artificial products, containing intermingled truth and error,

and are themselves objects of legitimate criticism.[1]

We are not specially concerned with defending Frank against this criticism, but we need to learn the lesson taught us by Kaftan for the advantage of our own investigation. We may, without elaborate discussion, at once and freely admit that, if Christian experience is to be worth anything for theological purposes, it must have a "principle," and that it must develop the consequences of that principle according to the laws prescribed by the subject itself, and not in the interest of any foregone conclusions. Philosophy undoubtedly plays its part in the construction of doctrinal definitions, and this is as evident in Ritschl and Kaftan as in Athanasius and Augustine. But to maintain the real contents of the Christian faith uncontaminated by the philosophy,—that is the supreme problem of the theologian in very truth.

Our task has been essentially lightened by one author in our own country, the late Professor L. F. Stearns, of Bangor Theological Seminary. In his "Evidence of Christian Experience" he has had chief reference to apologetics, but he has analyzed fundamental Christian experience with great care, has often traced its influence in determining Christian doctrine, and has added in the course of this labor a number of very valuable

[1] See *"Die Wahrheit der Christlichen Religion," erster Abschnitt, fünftes Kapitel.*

contributions to the specific theme before us. Conscious and no doubt unconscious indebtedness to this greatly lamented teacher will be found on many pages of these lectures. May they carry forward in some degree his labors, as he was in his last days girding himself to do![1]

With this brief review of the history of the experiential theology, we may advance at once to the more positive discussion of our theme. Acceding to Kaftan's demand that all theology, including a theology of experience, should begin

[1] In a private letter to the lecturer under the date of April 29th, 1891, Prof. Stearns wrote:—

"For the purpose of apologetics it is sufficient that we should have a true and first hand knowledge of the Christian facts; it is not needful that we should have an infallible knowledge of them. We are concerned in knowing that they are rather than what they are. But in systematic theology we aim at a more exact knowledge. The Christian experience of the individual is imperfect, and so far as it is mingled with sin, it has elements of error in it. The Christian experience of the church, taking it in its whole history and in its best forms, may contain less error; but still, we Protestants would not claim any infallibility for it. So we are thrown back upon the infallible revelation, as it is recorded in the inspired Scriptures, for the correction of Christian experience, whether individual or general. It is true that only the regenerate man can so interpret the Bible as to discern its truth, but his experience will always lag behind the Bible, as that of the church has always done. Then, experience has not an equal value for all parts of the system. Its value in eschatology is slight as compared with its value in christology."

with a "principle," we begin our study with the search for some ultimate element of Christian experience from which all the rest is derivable by the processes of legitimate analysis. Since we are studying experience, the most central and important of which must evidently be the experience of consciousness, we begin by asking whether there is any fact of consciousness which lends itself to our purpose; and we are thus silently presupposing certain things about consciousness itself to which we need first to pay a more explicit attention.

First of these, consciousness is a reliable source of knowledge. By consciousness I mean here simply the knowledge which the mind has of its own activities. There is such a knowledge. To think, and to know that I think, are one and the same indivisible act of the soul. And hence, when I say, "I am now thinking," I say what I must be able to say if I am thinking, and what I know with all the certainty of which I am capable. It has often been remarked that consciousness is an uncertain source of self-knowledge because our memory of what has occurred within us, even but a moment since, is often astray from the fact; and because many things take place amid such a whirl of perceptions and emotions that our powers of self-observation are too severely taxed. All this is true. And it is further true that self-observation is exposed to most of the infirmities that attend any observation, aris-

ing from inexperience, haste, seizure upon some misleading detail, lack of time and permanence in the phenomena, etc., etc. Yet, as other observation is on the whole, and under the proper precautions, the source of reliable knowledge,—yes, the source of the most of our reliable knowledge, so is self-observation. As Prof. James well remarks: "The only safeguard is the final consensus of our farther knowledge about the thing in question, later views correcting earlier ones, until at last the harmony of a consistent system is reached. Such a system, gradually worked out, is the best guarantee the psychologist can give for the soundness of any particular psychologic observation he may report." And, we may further say, it is the best guarantee that humanity can have.

Another presupposition involved in our search for our principle in consciousness is that made by psychology and many another science, that any man by knowing himself knows men in general. If we ask for an ultimate element of the Christian life found in consciousness, every one of us must consult his own consciousness. But, some objector will interpose, however much certainty consciousness may give any one as to himself, it gives him none as to Christianity in general. We reply that men are alike. What is true of one, individual idiosyncracies aside, will be true of all others. So we assume in psychology, and find our assumption confirmed by every subsequent

test we are able to apply; and so we may assume in Christianity, for the Christian is still a man, and what is true of him would be true of any other man if he were in exactly the same circumstances.

Another presupposition,—the consciousness of the Christian will differ from that of other men only in its objects, not in its nature. The Christian possesses no faculties that do not belong to every other man. He may have to do with facts which other men pass by, and may assume a peculiar attitude towards them. The chemist considers facts that the common man knows nothing about, and becomes more or less unintelligible to his fellows in language, range of thought, intellectual interests, and view of practical matters. But every one knows that, if he would attend to the same facts, he would be led through the same paths of thought and become like the chemist, understanding his language and thinking much as he does. And so with the Christian. Different as his tone of thought may seem to be from that of others, the difference is not essential. Given the same facts of experience and the same consciousness, and the same theology would result. If the utterances of Christian experience, based upon certain asserted spiritual facts, stand the tests to which other utterances of consciousness are subjected, then the non-Christian must admit that a Christian experience is a possible thing. The only question can be whether it is

actual. As to this the testimony of Christians is worth more than all the conjectures of a world.

Our search for a "principle," for the ultimate fact of Christian experience, may therefore now begin. We are to ask the question, What makes a man a Christian, so that, having this he is a Christian, whatever else he may lack, and lacking this, he is not a Christian, whatever else he may have. In all the ramifications of qualities and courses of conduct which we find in him, how are we to discern the trunk from which they spread, and follow this to the central tap-root which nourishes and supports the whole?

Few Christians would hesitate over the answer to this question. The common nomenclature of our Christian experience, founded upon biblical expressions and incorporated in the current language of the church, traces the beginning of the Christian life both historically and logically to the act of faith in Jesus Christ. We do not all pass through the same experience, and not every one can point to the precise hour when he put forth this act, and thus consciously "passed from death unto life." It may be buried in the oblivion which surrounds the earliest childhood. The process of change in other cases may have been so prolonged and the approach to the end so gradual that no one moment can be assigned when we first definitely recognized ourselves as believers. But make the passage we did, whether with the feeble step and the scanty knowledge

of infancy, or in the hesitation of a slowly ripening youth coming by almost unconscious degrees to the knowledge of himself, or by the prompt decision of the mature man, confessing sin, seeking pardon, and then ranging himself by deliberate and irreversible act upon the side of his Redeemer; and when it was made, then we became Christians.

But if it is thus easy to isolate the ultimate fact of Christian experience, it is less easy to interpret it. Faith is a mystery to most Christians and a greater mystery to other men. It has so many phases that to express it in any one simple form may seem to be to ignore or deny some other aspect equally important. It gathers about the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thus ordinarily presupposes a considerable body of knowledge about his nature and work. It often involves many doctrines as to human duty and destiny which are largely taken upon trust. It arises from certain sentiments of admiration, gratitude, loyalty, fear, and love, and gives birth to others. It is simple, confiding trust, repose of the soul, submission to the care of a perfect Redeemer, the attitude of passive receptivity; or it is enlistment in a service, as when a warrior girds on his arms and takes his place with firm purpose amid the dangers and terrors of battle. It is like a seed thrown into the earth, capable of growth, producing deeper thoughts, a more enlarged horizon of life and duty, warmer feelings, more profound

resolutions, longer and more consistent trains of action, than seemed at all possible from a view of its outward form or magnitude. But as faith is the ultimate thing in the Christian life, so it is itself ultimately one thing, which given, all the rest will develop, which wanting, nothing else can flourish. *It is the permanent choice of duty as such.* Jesus calls to duty embracing both God and man; and conscience affirms obligation and ultimately defines it in the same way. Man in response must take the right attitude towards obligatory duty. When he does, the mental gaze, fixed steadily by conscious effort upon it, acquires new knowledge of its abstract relations and concrete contents. Thus the intellect is enriched. But more, the affections are enriched, for they cannot fail to be stirred by the contemplation of the chosen object, so that duty becomes the center about which gather deep feelings of devotion. Duty cannot omit the relations which we sustain to the chief teacher in holy things whom we possess, and thus the attitude of trust in the Redeemer must develop from it. Loving contemplation of him will necessarily follow, and all that concrete piety which has from the beginning gathered about his person will in due time arise, except some malign influence interfere to thwart the orderly progress of Christian growth.

The ultimate fact in the Christian life is, then, the New Birth, which upon its merely human side is the permanent choice of duty. As such it is

a matter of immediate consciousness, and so of absolute certainty. As a conscious act, its presuppositions lie in consciousness, its subject is the conscious self, and its immediate consequences are also matters of consciousness. In a wide range of fact it is therefore at once seen to be an affair as to which the most unquestionable certainty of which man is capable may be entertained, the certainty, namely, of this immediate consciousness.

Analysis yielding us this result, we are furnished with a speedy justification of these presuppositions which we made and noticed at length a few moments since. The ultimate element of this consciousness being a choice, it is, of course, first known; second the same for every man; third like every other choice except in the thing chosen; and hence, fourth, an altogether possible experience, and deniable by any critic only in the sense that he does not believe it to occur. Let any man have the idea of duty, as every man has, and he is able to choose it as the law of his life. If he chooses it, he knows that he so chooses with an inexpugnable certainty; and he knows every result which follows from it in the sphere of consciousness. If, then, this choice be found, by a genuinely logical analysis, led by no "dogma derived from an alien source" and guided to no previously determined goal, to be productive of a system of principles worthy to be called an evangelical body of doctrine, then we shall have

gained that "principle" which Kaftan rightly demands a Christian system should have.

We turn therefore now to the attempt by careful analysis to bring out the things involved in this ultimate fact of Christian experience, the New Birth.

The first element we have already unwittingly introduced by the remark that "every man has the idea of duty." Choice of duty certainly presupposes the idea of duty, for nothing can be chosen which is not before the mind as an object of choice. The Christian finds, therefore, that he had a conception of duty long before he yielded to it; and further reflection upon his part convinces him that he was never without it. He did not always have that full and imperative sense which he now has. Duty seemed restricted to certain specified objects and relations, and strangely absent from others. Its outline was uncertain before the mental vision, and that vision sometimes strangely perverted, so that the "worse appeared the better reason." But some idea of duty and some responsiveness to its appeals he always had.

In this idea, now, there were involved four things at least, all of them of importance for our present theme. First, the supremacy of the faculty which deals with duty, the conscience, among the faculties of the soul. As there is only one voice in man which prescribes action, saying, Thou shalt, while all the others record facts, tes-

tifying in various ways as to what is, so in man and in the world with which man has to do, the moral element is supreme, moral interests above every other, the ideal world only that in which right and duty triumph, or rather reign in unquestioned pre-eminence. I do not know that anybody disputes this at the present time, and therefore we may spare ourselves the labor of further discussion of the thought. We need only to ask, Is the thought logically and correctly developed from the ultimate Christian experience; and here, for one, I see no defect in the analysis and expect no unfavorable criticism from others.

The second thing involved in the idea of duty is the conception of responsibility. Something is to be done; and, if it is not done, something more is to be said than that one has fallen short of this or that standard. The delinquent is responsible for this shortcoming, he, and not some one else. He holds himself to this standard as something of the greatest importance for him, from which in fact he cannot conceive himself to be free either now or at any other time, even if eternity itself be brought into the consideration, whatever minor changes of detail in the conception of duty may occur in the infinite hereafter.

This element of our analysis, again, we may set down as fulfilling Kaftan's entirely proper demand that it shall be logically correct, according to the "inner logic" of the subject. Remarkable as it will appear, it is true that every school of

ethics holds to responsibility and tries in some way to give it a satisfactory foundation in some part of the explanation of things. When philosophies of the will have been adopted which might seem to make this difficult, it has nevertheless been ultimately clear that, however unsuccessfully, their upholders made the attempt, satisfactory to themselves, to maintain responsibility. Even Spencer, whose theories have been so often employed by Philistines to evacuate the moral faculty of all authority, insists upon "rights" as strongly as any one, and holds men responsible for their conformity to the moral standard which he sets up,—no one more earnestly or unceasingly. And if a philosophy which teaches the evolution of our moral faculties by slow modifications from original sensations of pleasure and pain, can at the end be so strenuous in its moral tone, surely the plain deliverance of the common Christian conscience can be trusted, that man is responsible for his bearing towards the law of duty.

I have purposely left the statement of responsibility incomplete. There is another element in it, the element of self-condemnation in view of departure from the standard of duty. Men say of themselves, when they have transgressed the law of duty, I am guilty. What they mean by this is plainer to the reflecting mind by its own knowledge than it can be made by any verbal definition. Guilt is not the same as deformity; it

is desert of moral condemnation. The ugly dwarf, born misshapen and repulsive in outward appearance, is deformed, and may abhor himself as an object from the contemplation of which he shrinks with loathing; but this is not moral condemnation. The diseased and broken drunkard is equally ugly; but his view of himself contains an element not in the mind of the dwarf, for he views himself as responsible for his condition, he not only abhors but condemns himself, because he has brought this ugliness upon himself by his own transgression. He is guilty, not merely unfortunate as the dwarf is. He condemns himself in the forum of his own conscience. The idea of duty involves this element, and the awakened soul, who has been brought to moral reflection upon the great things of his nature by the new and radical experiences of the New Birth, ascribes to men in general the same responsibility before the law which he recognizes for himself.

The Christian's analysis now proceeds a step further. He has got the idea of duty and has embraced it; and now he recognizes that his previous state was a state of sin. He was not following the law of duty. He may be unable to recognize any law or system in his conduct. He may find it all disorder. Now he was following the impulse of appetite; now the leading of bad example; now principles of conduct which he recognizes, in the new light which has at last come to him, as wrong. He was drifting on a track-

less sea, carried by currents and impelled by winds from unknown quarters, towards a goal utterly uncertain to him except as having no security of good or repose. He did many things which he recognized as transgression: this was positive sin. He neglected many a bidding of duty: this was negative but real sin.

Examining himself still further, he finds nothing in himself which was not sin. Did he ever fully obey the voice of conscience as such? Did he ever view anything, not pleasurable nor in accord with his general course of life, simply as duty and respond to it as such? Even the failure to respond would be a true response, if it arose from dread of some vague danger, from compliance with custom, or from a desire to maintain an outward respectability. He was called upon to do that, perhaps otherwise unacceptable, which appealed to him as duty, for duty's sake alone. Did he ever do it? He recalls no example. He judges, therefore, that he was a sinner and wholly a sinner.

It may be a question whether this is the actual analysis of Christian experience or falls under Kaftan's criticism and requires a previous knowledge of the church dogma of entire human sinfulness and inability as the condition of its performance. Kaftan himself will not deny the correctness of the analysis, for he lays down, in perfect conformity with its result, the following positions as to sin in his "*Dogmatik*":—

"The being and life of man, of the individual as well as of humanity at large, is sinful by nature, since it knows nothing of God's law, but, in antagonism with the divine will, is governed and controlled by the law of sin, viz., to seek self, its desires and its honor. More precisely, it is a course of life in actual antagonism not only with the will of God but with his eternal essence, making the natural life a life of sin. Even that which is relatively good participates, on account of the connection in which it stands, in the character of sin."

So Kaftan. But the question may return, if not from him, Is the analysis correct? and it is only to be finally answered when the result of the analysis is found to be justified before the bar of the Christian conscience. Was the sinner who is now a Christian wholly a sinner in that unregenerate period of his life, as he thinks, so that, as Kaftan puts it, "the relatively good," such as honesty in the common relations of life, partook of the "character of sin"?

We are to remember that the answer is before the insistent demand of conscience that a man shall perform his duty. The question is not whether honesty is not "relatively good," that is, good in the common parlance of men, and immeasurably preferable to dishonesty. It is simply whether such honesty satisfies conscience. If a man is honest because he has never been tempted to dishonesty, although subsequent experience

is to show that he will fall as soon as tempted, is he truly honest? Is honesty genuine which endures because men are watching one, and so long as they are watching only? Is it genuine when it is practised because it is believed to be the best policy? These questions answer themselves. Nothing is honesty but that which does the honest thing because it is right, at the behest of duty recognized as supreme and obeyed as such. However much better for society a merely conventional honesty may be, so long as it can be preserved, nothing is honesty before conscience, and nothing possesses any virtue there which is not governed by a supreme allegiance to duty solely as such, for itself,—an allegiance unchangeable and conscious. Now this supreme allegiance to duty was just what the Christian knows he lacked before his new birth; and hence he knows that there was nothing in his life which possessed the character of true virtue. In this sense, negatively when not positively, all was sin.

Out of this view, by farther analysis of the facts of conscience, develops the Christian's view of the world apart from such saving experiences as he has himself had. As he studies his own nature, he learns the extent and significance of the law of habit. He recalls with perfect distinctness the consciousness of struggle and difficulty, of inability to obey the recognized law, with which his earliest efforts to do right were accompanied; or, if he does not recall them, he

finds them repeated in his present unsanctified self, so that he is often now a contradiction to himself, desiring to obey the law after the inward man, but finding a law in his members warring against the law of his mind. Habit, he finds, tends towards the automatic. Let anything become habitual, and it will tend to be done when we exert no positive volition in reference to it, as we walk without attention or purpose, each motion followed by its appropriate counterpart by the operation of an internal machinery which requires no attention from the central controlling consciousness. And thus the Christian finds old courses of action persisting when they have been once formally renounced, because they depend upon a disorder in him produced by the law of habit.

So much introspective personal observation gives the thinker. It is against this background that his predominant choice is displayed, and he sees the background as he sees the choice. But the Christian thinker is not thus isolated or compelled to draw all his knowledge from himself, any more than the psychologist, and he considers other men and learns as much from them as from himself. They, as well as he, are under the law of habit. Habit is racial and transmissible, propagated with human nature itself, intensified by bad example, hardened into nature. Prevailing corruption, general evil tendencies, universal sin, a network of evil with innumerable ramifications,

an organized, determinative evil in the world from which no man seems to escape and which results in bringing all men, until the moment when the new birth changes everything, under the dominion of a sin which leaves no action pure and no aspiration entirely untainted,—this is what man sees as he studies humanity under the light of his own spiritual experience of renovation.

A large view of history leads to the same result. We find the remnants of buried civilizations in Nineveh, Egypt, and Rome. Empires have risen only to fall; and the cause of fall has been, broadly stated, moral corruption. Whatever may have been true of more elevated individuals here and there, the evidences in painting and sculpture, in written word, in archaeological remains, of corrupting and dominating wickedness as characteristic of ancient civilizations, are too clear to be denied by any. Our experience with men of the past through their remains is the same as that with men of the present, and it is one of contact with dominating evil. We thus recognize in the world a force, if we may thus personify what reveals itself to us in innumerable single manifestations, a dominating force making for evil. It is resisted, its reign disputed, its right denied, its influence counteracted, its damage repaired by another force of which the Christian has become conscious in his own regeneration; but apart from this other force, the world is in the

control of evil. It is a kingdom of evil, a system, a network, as I have said, of evil, proceeding from a center, having a dominating tendency, as if it had a real king, and as if that king were the enemy of conscience and of the right and of all they carry with them and involve.

This is the Christian view of the unregenerated world. It was expressed in the earliest circles of Christians by the epithet "lost," applied both to men and to the world in which they live. One early saint wrote: "The whole world lieth in the evil one." He described it as "darkness," and said it was under "condemnation," a word taken up by another who said that for the regenerate there was "no more condemnation." Our analysis has brought us into agreement with the church, apostolic and later, in the view of the guilt, depth, universality, and organized power of sin in the world. And the analysis has been direct, correct, without prejudice and previous assumptions, as I think may be fairly claimed.

We have been casting our glance backwards from the moment of the new birth to the previous condition of the Christian. We are now about to direct our consideration to another quarter, and seek the source of those influences which operate upon the will and lead it to the great and decisive choice of duty as the law of life. But before we do this, it will be well for us to pause and review briefly our course to see what light has now been thrown upon the nature of Christian

experience and on the probability of its furnishing us any very valuable contributions to the system of evangelical doctrine.

1. We based our whole effort, then, upon the actuality of a distinctive Christian experience in the world. We assumed it. We did not seek to prove it, holding that a form of life which has given rise to the institutions and civilization which have proceeded from Christianity would be readily conceded by the most determined opponent of its highest claims to possess a distinctive character, however he might dispute its value.

2. We found the central element and ultimate fact in the Christian life in the new birth, which, on its experiential side, was defined as the supreme choice of duty as such. By successive analyses we found involved in this experience fundamental Christian principles. Thus—

3. We derived the supremacy of obligation and of the moral faculties in man.

4. The idea of duty was seen to convey the principle of responsibility.

5. The fact of sin, that is, of failure to obey conscience and perform duty, was seen to create guilt, or liability to moral self-condemnation.

6. Sin was perceived to be universal in humanity and unrelieved in the individual by holiness.

7. The world, as the seat and the active originator of universal sin, was seen to be a kingdom of evil, and lost.

Now here already, at the very threshold of our subject, where we might expect the outcome of our studies to be meager and should be prepared to content ourselves with the promise of future results in the absence of present performance, we have found a very considerable body of doctrine of the most vital and fundamental character, flowing from Christian experience. If our analysis has been correct and our positions can be maintained against all comers, we may fairly claim that the main question, Whether Christian experience can yield material exact and definite enough for the purposes of theology, is already settled; and from this point we should be justified in waiving all polemical discussion and advancing to the exclusively constructive labors of the positive theologian. We shall not, however, do this, for we shall gain by the specific reply to objections farther on constant confirmation of results already attained,—and no proof in theology is so strong as to dismiss lightly that corroboration of verification which is sought carefully by natural science to its great advantage.

As we assumed at the beginning of our discussion that there was a Christian experience, so again, we embarked upon its study without a definite definition of the term; and, as a matter of fact, we have employed it in several different significations which need to be separated from one another. Otherwise we shall be likely to fall into confusion in our own minds, and may be found

guilty of those logical fallacies which are always committed when ideas are not sharply discriminated in the mind of the reasoner. Note, then, the following forms in which Christian experience has already appeared:—

1. The experience of immediate consciousness, as when we discussed the choice of duty, the fact and implications of obligation, and the fact of sin as characteristic of the pre-regenerate life of him who is now a Christian.

2. Remembered experience. Thus pre-regenerate sin is to the unregenerate man a matter of immediate consciousness, but as investigated by the Christian it is no longer present, no longer immediate consciousness, but remembered experience. This class of experience is, of course, open to all the dangers which attend the use of memory elsewhere, and might be of comparatively little value in the present investigation, except for the fact that man has continued experience of sin, even after conversion, and hence has present knowledge of facts which acts by the law of association to strengthen the memory and render it accurate. As in psychology, the memory is essential in processes of religious introspection, and, if carefully employed, will produce here as there valuable results.

3. Facts of consciousness lying outside the exclusively religious sphere, as when we considered the law of habit.

4. Observation of the world, as when we

viewed the character of men in general and the world as a whole, and pronounced it in fact under the dominion of sin. This observation was, however, conducted by a Christian and from the Christian standpoint; and was hence entirely different from that kind of observation which we have of the processes of material nature, to which we must always remain outsiders. The course of secular history can scarcely be called a part of Christian experience, as such,—the rise and fall, for example, of Nineveh, Egypt, and Rome. Yet there is a Christian judgment upon such events, the judgment, that is, which Christian men form in consequence of their Christian principles; and this may be employed to throw light upon the meaning and scope of those principles. It is this Christian judgment which is reckoned in the body of Christian experience.

5. The experience of the original group of Christians has been briefly employed by reference to the New Testament Scriptures in which it is recorded. It has been employed here merely in confirmation of the analysis of present day experience, since it is seen to yield the same general view of the world as the Christian forms now in the light of his great renovating experience. But if valuable for confirmation, it must be also valuable for original development of the contents of the experience, for it can only confirm when it is capable of giving the same result with the experience confirmed by processes entirely independ-

ent of that experience. Hence there is opened here a prospect of still larger use of the New Testament. What that larger use ought to be is still a matter of so much controversy that we must subject it to a careful consideration at a later point. Enough here to call attention to its necessary place in the development of Christian experience,—a place so necessary that it has incidentally, we might almost say inevitably, introduced itself in the beginning of our investigation, uninvited and unexpected.

6. Specifically Christian history has been employed for the same purpose of confirmation, and with the same suggestion of further place and necessary employment in the development of experience.

Christian experience is thus various in its forms. Is it not various also in its evidential value? In reply to this question a concluding series of remarks needs to be made, and then we shall have gathered up the results of our present study and be prepared for the transition to the next stadium.

1. The certainty given by the Christian experience which is a matter of immediate consciousness, is the highest attainable by human beings. Such certainty pertains to the facts of regeneration, duty, sin, and holiness.

2. There might be a circle of truths gained from experience by inference; although nothing of this sort has as yet been introduced. This

truth would have a secondary degree of certainty, and within this degree would vary in clearness according to the more or less perfect character of the logical processes of inference.

3. Certainty as to the facts of observation, since observation is dependent upon a great variety of co-operating elements, and these lie for the most part outside of the sphere of consciousness, will have a still inferior degree of certainty,—a tertiary degree, if you choose, but still certainty.

4. There might be thus developed by more delicate analysis a longer series of descending grades of certainty that might finally fade into complete uncertainty. Such an analysis would serve, however, no useful purpose, and we may now content ourselves with the very important remark that not every deliverance of the Christian experience is of equal evidential value. To Christian experience as a whole no infallibility is to be ascribed. Indeed, since it is wholly subjective in its best and most valuable form, it is peculiarly unfitted to claim for itself the prerogatives of an infallible standard of faith. It is always open to denial, and never has the power of compelling more than an acknowledgment of its possibility. It is of varying value, from the highest to the lowest, under varying circumstances. Enough that its value is real. What that value is in any case must be determined from the case itself.

5. Some value belongs even to the impressions and general positions of Christians at large, with-

out regard to the grounds, correct, incorrect, or lacking, upon which they are founded. Great bodies of men, scattered over many lands and ages, do not come to common conclusions even of this indefinite character without real reasons, though these may be too inarticulate to receive any appreciable expression. The emotions of general Christianity also deserve respect. When a given doctrine is found profoundly to stir the Christian heart, generation after generation, and to promote piety, it receives thereby an element of substantiation which cannot be safely neglected.

It is, then, to be our problem to use this multifold Christian experience according to its own inner logic, ever mindful of its nature, observant of its limitations, not exaggerating or diminishing the degree of certainty it affords, as a source of Christian doctrine. Our object is primarily intellectual; but, as one of the great theological teachers of the present day has forcibly taught, we are dealing with matters which have no intellectual value in separation from their direct relation to the ethical nature of man. To know must be to do. In fact, knowing in any large and fruitful way is conditioned upon doing. To appreciate the unfolding demonstration of religious truth from the new birth, we must ourselves experience the new birth. I therefore close the discussions of this hour with the remark that to the full understanding of the processes of analysis

to be attemped in these lectures is requisite on the part of my audience that each perform them with me by means of the careful examination of the actual contents of his own experience; and that further, to analyze the Christian experience, it is necessary, first, to possess it. Before an audience of professed Christians like this, a speaker may properly presuppose the possession of a Christian experience upon their part. But it is, neither here nor anywhere, superfluous to emphasize the evident principle that none can safely rest in any such presupposition if he finds a living experience lacking when he begins the process of self-examination and analysis. If this course of lectures can serve to give new intensity to the Christian experience of my hearers and to enlarge its extent, and if new certainty can be added to the grasp by which they hold those things which we assuredly profess and believe, then, as doctrine is found to flow from life, so life will flow from doctrine, grace respond to knowledge, and the men of God be more perfectly furnished for every good work. Unto the attainment of such a result, I humbly invoke upon these hours of common study, the constant blessing of Almighty God.

LECTURE II

THE ORIGINATING SOURCE OF THE NEW BIRTH

THE studies of the last hour left us face to face with an urgent problem. We had been surveying the world with the eyes of the regenerated man, who from the elevation of a new experience had looked backwards upon the world out of which he had come and had recognized in it a kingdom of evil. He saw himself to have been bad, and the world like himself; he perceived the connections of evils and their ramifications and interwoven relations; he realized the combination and system existing in society, making for the perpetuation and intensification of evil; and, had he not himself experienced liberation from evil's thraldom, he would have believed its forces too strong, its vigilance too great, its hostility to every good motion in the heart too intense, to leave possibility of escape by any. Yet he had escaped, and like Lot upon the mountain top could look back upon the cities of the plain; but, unlike Lot, he found himself not alone, nor merely surrounded by a few isolated individuals, but one of a great company, which on its part was organized, had constructed a kingdom of good, set over

against that kingdom of evil, already engaged in manifold conflict with it, and already having many a token of victory upon its banners. Whence this liberation, this organization of souls, this co-operating activity, this large result? Is there a power at work in the world, but not of it? What can it be, if there is such a power? Of what character, and from what source?

This is the quest for the origin of the new birth; and it may be answered, as it often has been, by a simple reference to the powers of man. It is a choice, as we have seen, on its conscious side, and it may be said that this fact explains it. A man chooses duty just as another man chooses self-gratification, or as one chooses a profession. The origination of such a choice in the gloom of the kingdom of evil is thus no more remarkable than the coming of the day after the night.

But is the answer as easy as all this? Does the suggested illustration confirm it? Is the coming of day nothing remarkable, requiring no explanation, entirely obvious and simple? The reference of the critical change by which a man abandons his environment in the kingdom of evil and becomes a new man, to the powers of his nature explains nothing. Mere powers are no explanation of anything. The tree has the power of absorbing the water of the earth carrying in solution the mineral substances necessary to its growth, but it dies. Two youths sit side by side on the benches of the school-room, possessed both

of the powers of acquisition and thought, but the one becomes a scholar and the other wastes his time in play. One might as well say that the power of perception is all that is required to explain the idea which I have at this moment of the paper from which I read and of the characters traced upon it, as to say that a definite choice is explained by the mere power of choosing. When a man makes a bad choice, when a boy well educated, the child of good parents, trained in good habits, chooses to plunge into drunkenness, and when in drunken frenzy he murders an inoffensive neighbor who is trying to serve him, we do not say that his power of choice explains all this; but we answer the agonized cry of friends and companions for its cause by revealing the evil influences about him, and the slow approach through the series of foregoing evil choices to the moment when the gratification of the desire for brute exhilaration was more powerful than the conviction of duty or the sad reproaches of friends or the fear of the consequences of the loss of self-control. A good choice, especially one revolutionary in its effect upon the character, needs an explanation equally.

That explanation is not to be derived from the world about the new-born man. That world is the kingdom of evil, shot through, no doubt, like cloth of gold, with gleams of good, but itself evil, its tendencies downwards, its influence not in behalf of the supreme choice of duty. The

Christian need not deny this "good," claimed for our modern civilization, which may be said to possess a tendency to elicit a good choice from the will, nor need he undertake the difficult attempt to prove to others what he assumes for himself, that it is all the effect upon the kingdom of evil of the progressing kingdom of light. It is enough to ask the question whether such tendencies are adequate; whether influences in behalf of duty sufficient to lead the sinner to its supreme choice can come from men none of whom makes such a choice for himself. Now the fact of the Christian choice divides humanity into two classes, those who have it and those who have it not, just as the oath of allegiance separated our army in the year 1861 into the loyal and the disloyal. From those who choose duty supremely good influences must necessarily radiate with the directness of light and the kindling efficiency of the solar heat. Placed in public office they make for faithfulness and honor, in business for industry and honesty, in private life for gentleness and unselfishness. But these are not "the world," not the kingdom of evil, for their choice of the good needs explanation,—is, indeed, the very thing we seek now to explain. Could these others produce it in them? This is the question; and it can only be answered, No! It is absolutely unthinkable. If my influence is for honesty in business I may help my associates keep them-

selves honest; but shall I help them to the supreme choice of duty if they know that I am indifferent to right in the other relations of life, mendacious or licentious or drunken? The goodness of such a man is not true goodness at any point. Even when he does what is objectively right, such as the restoration of borrowed money, he does not do the subjective right, the right for the sake of the right alone, the right as such; else he would do it always and everywhere. The morals of the world at large are confessedly founded on custom and expediency, not on right. The total influence of such a world is and remains evil, against the right as such, and forever as incapable of generating genuine and predominating goodness in any soul as a dynamo electricity when no electricity has been applied to it. A bad man can no more make another man good than the eclipsed sun can make a noon-day! To attract towards an ideal of goodness that ideal must be held up conspicuously and constantly, in purity and perfection. Even then the effort to generate goodness may fail. But the bad man never holds up that ideal, and hence never attracts towards the good.

It seems to be imagined in certain quarters that the evolution of humanity throughout the long course which antedates and follows the dawn of history is sufficient to explain the rise of holy choices in some souls and so in all in whom

they may actually be found. Mr. Spencer's theories[1] would be consistent with this idea. The origin of all well regulated conduct, and thus ultimately of that conduct which we call right and wrong, he teaches, is the blundering effort to satisfy our cravings. Men are thus viewed, in strict analogy with what goes on in the animal kingdom, as learning entirely by experience what tends to promote individual good, to propagate the race, and maintain the social organism. That conduct is at last termed right which accomplishes these ends. Now, evidently, upon this theory, whatever is perceived to promote the good instinctively desired will be chosen, and the degree of approximation by any individual to the normal standard of conduct will be measured by the degree of intelligence which he possesses. Bad conduct is simply the result of ignorance. Just as light increases will good conduct increase, and the rise of a supreme choice of duty in a kingdom of evil would be totally explicable, if the course of that kingdom, as a progress of evil, were experimentally found to limit the acquirement and possession of good, whether individual or collective. Such a choice would be simply the recognition of the fact that self-centered and irregular pursuit of hap-hazard delights was injurious and a source of the prevention of the attainment of preponderating desires. Such knowledge must arise in

[1] "Data of Ethics", chaps. II. and III.

some minds in the course of time by the operation of the law of variation, and thus, out of the evolving process, because it was a kingdom of evil, would come knowledge of the evil and the renunciation of the same in the interest of those goods which are essential, in the last analysis, to the mere preservation of humanity. For, it may be said in explanation of this possibly questionable phrase, upon the evolutionary hypothesis association and the social virtues are essential to the progress of humanity;[1] and its progress is essential to its preservation. Thus the kingdom of evil, far from being an obstacle to the rise of the good choice, and thus constituting the puzzle and creating the inquiry upon which we have embarked, is the very source of the good choice. The appearance, here and there, of persons making this great choice as perception shall arise, here and there, of the true tendency of things, was to be expected.

We might admit the explanation as long as it were confined to the pre-human history of the world, or as long as, in the period of human history, the gratification of physical wants and not the fulfillment of a moral ideal were the good sought. Yet, even here, there is an ideal held up before the mind, for brute and man are seeking " fulness of life," as in various phrase we are informed. Such an ideal is thus a confessed ne-

[1] F. H. Giddings, " Principles of Sociology ", Bk. III., chap. I.

cessity, and evolution differs from Christian philosophy at this point only in the source from which the ideal is derived, making it the instinctive tendency of nature brought into concrete definition by the contacts of life. Arising upon occasion of various experiences, it must still antedate those experiences, or it could never serve in their interpretation and in the selection of the elements of the good. But in the sphere of human history as we know it, in this actual world standing now at the threshold of the new age, facts by no means conform to the theory presented. This is not a world where men always follow their knowledge of moral relations or even of the mere physical connection of certain courses with well-being. Men choose what they know to be both wrong and injurious. They default in the discharge of their duty. To use the phrase of the evolutionists, they choose the gratification of the immediate demands of appetite even when they know that the perfection of their own individual life and their relations to the life of the race both forbid it. The supposed explanation of the rise of good choices is only possible when it deals with a world where there is no such thing as sin in the Christian sense of the word, where evil is still nothing but blundering, and men are always following their best knowledge, in short, where the law of necessity reigns. But sin has entered, it has become dominating in history, it has constituted a kingdom, and hurled the moral

ideal into the dust to set upon its vacated throne self-gratification, and has thus made perverse wrong-doing the rule in the world. In such a world the rise of holy choices does demand an explanation by the exhibition of an adequate cause from without. The attempt to explain it from within can only succeed by denying the existing world itself, with the facts of sin and moral degradation. It fails because the exemplifications of freedom cannot be explained by a theory of necessity.

We return therefore to our proposition that the new choice of duty in the Christian's soul did not come from the world.

Neither did it come from himself. It may seem so. There are forces of nature which tend towards the emphasis of duty and might conceivably lead to its choice. All those perceptions of advantage which the theory just reviewed details, tend, when the mind is elevated to some eminence from which they are in full view, to recommend the right; for right is beneficial and perceived utility is often an index of what is right. The sinner has a conscience, and it often speaks with perfect plainness in specific junctures of life. Nor are his emotions and affections all so depraved as to afford no help in these regards. Certainly, if we were reasoning in an entirely abstract sphere, and handling these facts of human nature as so many algebraic quantities whose real magnitude and denomination were en-

tirely unknown to us, we might say that the union of perceived interest, of commanded duty, and of the desire of good were enough to explain the choice of that upon which they unite. But the experience of the Christian gives concrete contents to the *a*, *b*, and *c* of the moral equation He knows that his perceptions were clouded, his conscience weak, his emotions and affections perverted. Life is so intricate a network of influences that duty is scarcely isolated in such a way as to enable these varied lights to be equally focussed upon it together. A partial duty may be thus recognized and chosen. But duty, general and comprehensive duty, all-embracing and imperative duty,—with what reception will that meet in a world where men know themselves to be choosing and fast grasping a multitude of things with which their interests and pleasures and even their safety have been suffered to become involved till to choose plain and simple duty as such would be to revolutionize life? No! Man has a fundamental, settled bad will; and to the changing of that none of these feebler forces, fitfully tending towards the right, will ever prove itself adequate, nor even any possible combination of them.

Not only experience of himself, but the experience gained in the Christian's history, confirms this position. He has reasons, as we shall soon see more at length, to ascribe the initiative in his conversion to something exterior to himself; and

he knows that he did not even co-operate with that gracious and beneficent visitor, because he remembers how he struggled against him as with the violence of the madman. In fact he was mad, mad with sin. He recapitulated in himself perhaps the experience of Paul, finding himself another "captive to the law of sin and death," and crying at last, "O! wretched man that I am!" The real, practical slavery to sin, whatever it may be metaphysically, forbids to his experience the entertainment of the idea that freedom came from within. It is no function of jailors to set prisoners free!

Not from the world, not from himself, did this holy choice of duty come. Whence did it? Interest accumulates upon the question, and already presentiments of a great discovery seem to attend its self-suggesting solution. But let us not hasten or leap with the bound of an intuitive faculty to the answer. Let us patiently follow each minutest element of the developing reply.

It was mediated, probably, by finite agencies, by men who had themselves experienced the same change. Not the kingdom of evil is its origin but the kingdom of light! What theologians have generally called "the means of grace," the Scriptures, the public preaching of the word, private ministrations of good men, with the prayers of friends, and the discipline of life among men, were the occasion of our perceiving our duty and turning away from our sin. Yet these

things were all "means" as they are rightly termed, and we seek that of which they are the instrumentalities, the grace itself, the ultimate explanation which shall account for the first origination of a good choice in any man, and for the existence of any kingdom of light, as well as for the shining of that light in our own souls.

When I search my own history before I chose duty, if that choice is a definite and well remembered event in my life, I find that it was the culmination of a considerable series of previous events, and no doubt connected with many others which I do not remember. There was the patient training of a religious mother, the instructions of faithful teachers, the hearing of the gospel, the experience of transgression, culminating in a deep sense of personal sinfulness and a longing desire for the forgiveness and the favor of God. It may be that I displayed a peculiar hardness, and was broken by a great terror springing out of a definite and shocking fall, and the vision of merited punishment on its way to seize me. It may be that at the moment of my chief anxiety, when I was melted in sorrow and just then accessible to well adapted words from some skillful adviser, a gentle ministrant of warning and consolation was sent to me who could speak the precise message I required. Or, I may have been snatched out of bad companionships and corrupting occupations and brought to a place of leisure and solitude, where my mind was susceptible to

new impressions, and where the Christian life commended itself to my newly opened receptiveness by unanticipated examples of its sweetness and power, and where I speedily yielded. Or, I was led by repeated falls before some special temptation, recognized and dreaded, and by the repeated failures of partial reformations, and by accumulating despair, to grasp suddenly amid my engulfing sorrows at some rescuing truth cast out by no visible human agency from the impersonal Bible.[1] In view of such considerations I feel the irresistible impression that there was higher intelligence presiding among all these lower ones, co-ordinating their efforts and combining their influences upon the vital point of action within me and eliciting my final choice. And when I reflect upon my life since, when I see where I am and what I am doing in the world, how I have been led to this point, where I have turned half unconsciously, or wholly so, away from avenues to wealth and honor, how my eyes have often been shut to possibilities, and often opened to hopes that still remain only hopes, how arguments determinative to other men have glided over me without impression and others usually brushed aside with contempt have seemed to me great and decisive, and how all have converged upon the present moment and work, making me fit for this and unfit for that other lot

[1] To all these epitomes of individual experience historic names might be attached.

which some companion of my youth has come to fill, I recognize in all this plan and guidance; and I see with tenfold clearness now that there was therefore plan, agency, personally guided forces in that original choice by which I gave myself to the good and from which all the rest has come.

I venture to say that such, with infinite variation of degree of definiteness and of detail in individual cases, is the verdict of every Christian in the review of his personal history, if that have been marked enough to invite analysis and if he be possessed of the requisite analytical power to form a correct conclusion. I have selected the example of some one who in the years of his mature manhood has made a definite decision for right as a typical case by which all less clear cases may be rightly judged. But the supposition of typical cases is not necessary to the argument. Every mature Christian can follow the plan in his own life more or less fully, and can no more doubt it than he can the existence of plan in the outcome of the process by which his physical frame has resulted from the first contact of two simple cells through all its marvellous history of growth. Plan in the physical world, and plan in this inner, spiritual world of the Christian's distinctive experiences, rest on the same analysis of analogous facts; and as the argument from the one to intelligence in the universe is simple, direct, and conclusive, so it is in the other. A person, above the means operating in my conver-

sion and presiding over their adaptation and application, is the only adequate explanation of that event.

I come thus in conversion in contact with a Person. Just as I have contact and know other personalities through the total of impressions which they make upon me, so I know this Person through what I receive from Him. We often suppose ourselves to be in much more real and tangible contact with men than with God. But is it so? What is even "tangibility" but the capacity of finally affecting my mental self in some definite way? Ultimately all the "contact" of finite personalities is through the ideas received in the soul. In this sense I come literally in "contact" with God; and is it any wonder that at times the impression made by his agency should be so direct and person-like that men should have what they called a "consciousness" of his presence? Is it not such, if there is ever the consciousness of any presence? And what is it but a natural objectification of real inner processes when some such men have seemed to hear the inward and God-given thoughts of their souls borne to them upon the words of audible speech from the divine presence? Christian experience in its more pronounced and remarkable forms thus often testifies to a consciousness of the divine which is to be respected as the intensified degree of that which every Christian virtually has in the experiences of the new birth.

Thus the exterior cause of conversion has become to the Christian apprehension a Person. But the analysis of the fundamental Christian experience cannot stop here. The character of the result at which the persuasive influences assembled and applied by this Person were directed, and of the object upon which they were expended, reveals something of his own character. Two aspects immediately attract us, the one, that the action promoted by them is holy action, the choice and consequent performance of the good in its clearest and highest known form, as recognized duty; and the other, that there was no meritorious cause in the unrepentant and still rebellious sinner why this exalted Person should have thus initiated a saving process in his soul. As aiming at the production of holiness, he must himself be holy; and as coming self-moved to bestow the greatest conceivable favor on the undeserving, he must be determined by a love which is impartial and embraces all men, since it asks for no reason in the man, but breaks over the obstacle of sin, and brings salvation to him who has no merit. It is only the further explication of the implications of the history of conversion as already traced, when it is added that this holy Person must also be conceived as unlimited, since in his government over the history of individuals by which he guides their lives towards conversion, is involved his government over the world and all the universe; for no event can be so small

but that it might imperil the result in any or every case of salvation, if only it were permitted to take its way undirected and unrestrained.

I hint at these courses of argument rather than fully develop them, because they are nothing new in form, having been long used by the great theologians in the derivation of the idea of God from the facts of the material world. They apply with equal cogency to the facts of the spiritual world of inner experience, for the arguments differ in no respect but in the matter with which they are concerned. Thus familiar in form and cogent in substance, they have brought us to the recognition, in the characteristic and initial experiences of the Christian life, of an infinite and holy Person as their cause; and to this Person, loving and gracious, we assign the name GOD.

I would emphasize thus the regularity and cogency of this proof of God's being because I wish to emphasize still more strongly the fact that it is a peculiarly Christian proof. It begins in facts which no one but a Christian knows, and thus could originate with no one else. Historically, also, it is the Christian proof; for, beginning with Abraham, there developed in his family and through long generations among the people of Israel, the great outlines of this proof, under the guidance of a living experience. Jacob learnt God's omnipresent providential care by what he experienced at Bethel, David among the rocks of Engedi, Hezekiah in the deliverances of his sick-

bed, the people as a whole in the Exodus and the Captivity. The proof came to its culmination in the teachings of our Master, who first distinctly declared "God is a Spirit" and condensed the gospel in the sentence, "God so loved the world that he sent his only Son." And, further, it is found nowhere else than in the circle of Hebrew-Christian religious experience. Even Plato, whose conception of God rises confessedly highest among heathen writers, never quite makes him the sole ultimate cause of all things,[1] nor in all his ascriptions to him of beneficent regard for men rises quite to the height of true benevolence,[2] so as to give him the moral character ascribed to him by the Christian experience of unmerited grace. The Christian idea of God as the infinite and personal First Cause whose character is love stands alone in the history of human thought, lifting itself, Shasta-like, in the dazzling brilliance of its perfect crown of eternal purity above all the grovelling practices of heathenism, and above all the feeble efforts of the untaught soul to formulate the supreme excellence for itself. It is thus—let the point be well marked—it is thus not only derivable from Christian experience by the processes of reflective thought, but it has actually

[1] There is always the dualistic matter out of which the world is formed, even when it fades into the μὴ ὄν, which has, in spite of its name, some shadowy existence.

[2] See Jowett's Plato, introduction to the Timæus, § 3.

been so derived, and is therefore the first great contribution of Christian experience to the theology of the church and to the speculations of the world. For, when speculation has attempted critically to ground the idea of God in reason, as in the days of Kant, she has uniformly pre-supposed the exclusively Christian ideas of causality and goodness in the Divine[1], historically derived from Christianity, or she has lapsed with Hegel into a pantheism which has been the negation of God.

It would be a pleasant task, here anticipating the whole work of Christian reflection upon the fundamental ideas of God gained in the experience of salvation, to trace the development of the divine attributes, till the idea of God was attained in its fulness; and, particularly, to trace the fruits of the knowledge of God in Christ from the hour when the Master said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," till Paul knew God as the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and John said, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son," in both of which expressions is embosomed the idea of the divine love. But we must impose upon ourselves the limitations for space's and topic's sake that the conditions under which this study is conducted demand; and, now, having reached the first great conclusion from the initial expe-

[1] See Ritschl, *"Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung"*, vol. III., p. 184, first edition.

riences of the new birth, go on to draw still other immediate conclusions ere we advance to further discussions. One remark as to the degree of certainty attained through experience as to the being of God. The facts of a fundamental choice, of motives operating upon me and eliciting it, of subsequent harmony introduced into my soul, are all matters of the immediate consciousness, and thus as certain to me as my own existence. The existence of God is evidently certain with a secondary degree of certainty, as the product of a rational process of inference. I know it mediately, through facts which are not identical with it, through what God himself does for me. It is not therefore uncertain; but it is secondarily certain,—certain still, but not immediately and primarily so. We thus pass on our way towards truths which are certain by still inferior degrees of certainty, as was premised at the close of the first lecture; and clearness of thought, as well as the demands of the practical use of our certainty, requires that we should constantly mark the varying degrees as we proceed. In this way, while claiming much for Christian experience, we shall not claim too much.

But, now, still lingering in the region of the immediately certain, we remark the consequences for the Christian, of the change through which he has passed in conversion. The first is what we ordinarily call forgiveness, but which we must now designate, since we are describing what is

accurately the experience of the Christian, and not even that experience in its secondary elements, as a sense of harmony and freedom of soul. There was self-condemnation for conscious sin, the resistance of the will against the urgent motives for holiness, the abnormal excitement of the desires for unworthy objects, and all the turmoil of that war in the members, the outlines of which do not require retracing here. Now comes harmony, self-approval in place of condemnation, the glad acquiescence of the will with perceived duty, the stilling of unruly emotions and desires, and the cessation of the tumult of inner war. And, if not every inner conflict seems permanently set at rest, it is perceived now that all the higher and purer and more normal elements of the man are at perfect harmony with his new and governing choice.

This is essentially salvation. If the powers of a man can be always in harmony, if he can always choose the right, if he finds high ideals set before him, and if he always responds to them and goes forward in harmony of soul to their successive incorporation in his being, and if in all this he is in contact with God and is the object of the divine guidance and love, this is "life," and "eternal life." It would have the highest subjective value to the man who knew nothing outside of himself, for it would be for him, though he stood in perfect isolation from other moral beings, that fulness of life which evolution

teaches all living things desire. But when he is known to be a member of a moral community, every other member of which will bestow upon him the same moral approval in his present attitude of allegiance to duty, its value is enhanced; and when he has learned to view himself as under the guidance of God in this new spiritual development, he ascribes to the divine mind the same moral judgment which human agents form in reference to him. Then first his subjective experiences obtain a true objective validity, and the internal harmony of the human soul becomes the forgiveness of God.[1]

Thus we reach a second great contribution of

[1] One thing is certain. The sense of peace is not an act of the soul forcing itself into some artificial state, or even voluntarily and intentionally producing any state whatever, natural or unnatural. Forgiveness often comes unexpectedly, contrary to prejudice, while the soul still believes itself unconverted, often by what seem to be inexplicable outward phenomena, especially in the case of the illiterate who are little used to self-examination. The Christian reasoning is simple. Here is an effect which bears the marks of an objective result of certain spiritual conditions. Those conditions originate in divine action; therefore we conclude that the result is of divine origin. Or viewed independently, these experiences are the bringing of the soul to a harmony for which it would seem to be designed. but which it has not had before. The result is conformity to what seems to be the original plan of the soul. It is itself, therefore, not accidental, not merely natural in distinction from supernatural, but originates in the same source with the plan itself, that is, with God. God truly forgives sin.

Christian experience to evangelical theology, the doctrine of justification by faith. Subjectively, justification can be nothing but forgiveness. The Christian by exercising faith, that is, in the complete surrender which throws his soul wholly upon God for salvation, experiences forgiveness. He requires nothing else, whether mediation of a priesthood or performance of good works. He is justified by faith alone.

This is the logical proof of the doctrine from experience, and it is complete. But, historically speaking, it was experience that gave the church the doctrine. Careful study of Luther's career[1]

[1] Luther says once, in commenting upon Galatians (chap. iii. v. 2): "So we also at this day, convicted by the testimony of our own conscience, are constrained to confess that the Holy Ghost is not given by the law but by the hearing of faith. For many heretofore in the papacy have gone about with great labor and study to keep the law, the decrees of the Fathers, and the traditions of the Pope; and some, with painful and continual exercises in watching and praying, did so weary and weaken their bodies that afterwards they were able to do nothing; whereby, notwithstanding, they gained nothing else but that they miserably afflicted and tormented themselves. They could never attain to a quiet conscience and peace in Christ but continually doubted of the good will of God toward them. But now, since the gospel teacheth that the law and works do not justify, but faith alone in Jesus Christ, hereupon followeth a most certain knowledge and understanding, a most joyful conscience, and a true judgment of every kind of life, and of all things whatsoever." This is, as it were, a history of his own religious life, and exhibits how the

will illustrate how completely his convictions rooted in his experience, and how he derived from it that glowing eloquence, that irresistible torrent of mingled feeling and logic, which swept away all the opposition of his adversaries and imparted to those he won a large measure of his own rock-like certainty. And I think we may say that historically it is Christian experience which has sustained this doctrine in the various Protestant communions. It is not enough that the Scriptures are so clearly for it, for in the peculiar struggle which Protestant evangelical theology has had to fight, she has been confronted by a foe which claimed the sole power to interpret the Scriptures and met every argument from exegesis by one from authority. But when Rome put forward her priesthood as essential to the procurement of forgiveness from God, the Protestant community could answer that without a "priesthood" she found herself in the possession of the spiritual presence and favor of God, and without an infallible earthly guide, she found herself acquainted with the way of salvation.[1] To Rome's assertion of impossibility she opposed the fact. Had she not known with the immediate

new conceptions of salvation had entered into the inmost consciousness of the times.

[1] I take the liberty to refer to another work by myself, "The Fundamental Ideas of the Roman Catholic Church", pp. 73 and 189, for further development of this thought. It is also resumed in the sixth lecture below.

certainty of the direct experiences of the soul, the claims of an ancient and imposing institution, the weakness of courses of reasoning founded upon propositions which were themselves objects of dispute, and the natural influence on the mind of the terrible struggle at arms and the immense sacrifices required to sustain Protestant liberties for a full century, would surely have led to final surrender. But because of her knowledge this was impossible. Successive leaders re-exemplified the same fundamental truths. Gustavus Adolphus was as clear and firm in the Protestant principles as Luther himself; and thus it came to pass that he "rescued at Breitenfield"—as others had done elsewhere—"religious freedom for the world."[1] And to-day, because of the continued testimony of experience, this doctrine maintains its place without noteworthy opposition as the fundamental doctrine of the evangelical system.

We have already arrived by analytical development at the activity of God as the ultimate ground of the conversion of the Christian. God moves, when this decisive moment of the individual life draws near, to elicit its determinative choice. Christian reflection has sharpened this statement to the further one, that he always thus initiates the train of influences leading to conversion, and

[1] The inscription on the Breitenfeld monument near Leipzig:—

"Rettete am Breitenfeld
Glaubensfreiheit für die Welt."

that this great choice has not only its ultimate occasion but its originating source in the divine activity. Man never comes self-moved to repentance; but God always moves him. This is the doctrine styled in theological nomenclature, "prevenient grace."

Its main contention, that God moves man to repentance, is clearly the voice of experience, as we have already abundantly seen, and no further proof is here required. The only occasion of question will be the addition of the word "always" in the formulation of the doctrine. Does man never move first towards God? Granted that my own experience is that I was divinely guided in my choice, can I say that no man, coming to a sense of himself as a sinner, just as men come to know that they are Europeans or Africans, ever turned away from sin and sought God? Can experience render any such proof till every man that was ever converted has been interrogated, and all have said, "I did not come self-moved to God"? And can it be claimed that such would be the universal answer when Pelagius and the Pelagians of every age, some of them doubtless good men, and presumably speaking under the illumination of their own experience, have denied the doctrine of prevenient grace?

We may grant at once that experience, if it is to include everything that has been felt or uttered on the subject, cannot prove the doctrine before us. We may go further than that and admit,

yes, even advance and emphasize the principle that mere experience can never give us a strictly demonstrated universal proposition. We seek only the general rule, the practically universal proposition, the great religious fact of immediate and practical value and of unspeakable importance, that God is the originating cause of the new birth. Experience can certainly give us general rules in religion, as she can in physics or in chemistry; and, it may be, she can suggest more.

Experience, then, has something more to say than simply that I, the subject whose experience is demanded, refer my new life to God as its sole origin. Such is my testimony, but I found my opinion as to my own case on grounds that apply to others also. I have examined my own self, and I see no effective tendencies either of will or of emotion towards the commands of conscience and the highest intellectual perceptions of my interest, which would explain my final action. In fact, conversion was the direct reversal of constant previous courses of choice. If sin can be properly called consistent, I was a consistent and persistent sinner. And so were other men. It is, therefore, not simply because I actually came to God under the guidance of his providence that I judge others always to do so; but I come to the perception of the fact that I was thus personally led by divine providence, guided by specific reasons which are general in their application and compel me to infer the necessity of the same

leadership for all men. I did not merely receive, I required this leadership; and so do all. Not a piece of chance good fortune is it that has befallen me, but a divine condescension to my bitter and completest necessity that has rescued me; and the same necessity encompasses every one born with the nature and amid the surroundings which belong to this world-wide kingdom of evil.

But, now, this analysis of experience is for us who make it entirely subjective. It will be necessary for us ere we have advanced many steps further in this study to enlarge the scope of investigation so as to include more objective elements; and it may be that some of you will require for your best progress that we should make this advance now. I may be perfectly certain for myself, you say, that given experiences admit of only one interpretation; but when I hear others give another interpretation, as different from mine as the color red from green, I begin to wonder whether I am not suffering under a spiritual color blindness. True, knowledge about myself is knowledge about man; but I begin to think it as necessary to test my spiritual, as it would be under similar circumstances to test my physical eyesight, by the standard of the general verdict of humanity. What have Christians in general taught, therefore, about the matter of prevenient grace?

There are many ways of arriving at such general testimony of Christians as to their experi-

ence; but one of them is specially suggestive and valuable for the topic which is now before us. It is that derived from the historic creeds. It has the advantage among methods of eliciting the voice of general experience that it cannot be charged with unduly exalting emotional and possibly momentary utterances to an undeserved rank as exponents of permanent experiential conviction. Creeds have been formed deliberately, and when not drafted, as has generally been the case, by some representative body, they have maintained themselves only because they gained the common consent of the church which received them, and so have universally spoken for more than their individual authors.

Now, it is a remarkable fact that the voice of all the great creeds, Roman, Greek, and Protestant, is for the doctrine of prevenient grace. Nearly all of them teach it with great clearness, only the Greek creeds, which ground predestination on the foreknowledge of the faith of the predestinate, being indistinct.[1] We read, however, in the "Confession of Dositheus" of a "prevenient grace" bestowed "like light in darkness"

[1] Thus the "Orthodox Confession" of Mogilas can scarcely be said to do more than leave a place for prevenient grace, quest. xxvii., end (Schaff, Creeds of Christendom, vol. II., p. 308); but the "Longer Catechism" speaks, somewhat ambiguously, of "preparatory grace", quest. 123 (Schaff, *ibid.*, p. 465), and refers "spiritual life" to the Holy Spirit, quest. 240 (Schaff, p. 481).

upon all, which some " obey " and are saved.[1] Indeed, most of the creeds teach the doctrine of election, which is the consistent formulation *sub specie eternitatis* of prevenient grace. Thus, of course, the Calvinistic creeds, such as the English (the Anglican Articles, the Irish Articles, and the Westminster Confession), the Scotch, French, and Dort creeds, teach it plainly with remarkable agreement of phraseology; but, it deserves especial notice, the anti-Calvinistic creeds have either affirmed election (as the Formula of Concord) or have contented themselves with omitting it (as the Articles of Wesley).[2] In no case, either at the time of the Reformation or more recently, has any creed belonging to an ecclesiastical body which could be properly called evangelical, positively denied even election, much less prevenient grace. Further than this, the creeds that have omitted the doctrine of election have all explicitly declared the doctrine of prevenient grace in the sense in which it is derived from experience, that the initiative in conversion is given by the gracious activity of God. The symbolical expression of Christian experience is

[1] See Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

[2] Thus the Arminian Articles (1610) and the Society of Friends (1675); while, of modern creeds, the following affirm it,—Auburn Declaration; Evang. Free Church of Geneva; Free Church of Italy; Moravian Easter Litany; Cong'l Union of England and Wales; Cong'l Creed of 1883, U. S.; Reformed Episcopalian.

thus but one, that the originating cause of regeneration is God.

Our analysis of our experience which has seemed so clear and certain to us as we have traced it, is therefore not merely subjective and exposed to the error which an abnormal subjectivity may introduce. We have brought our vision to the test of the universal vision and have found it correct. So clear, so universal, so unmistakable have been the features of the simplest Christian experience at this point that Christendom has united in the substantial acceptance of that favorite aphorism of Augustine's "Every good thing is either God or from God."

We have thus our complete answer to the objections of that philosophy which, ascribing the new birth itself to the gradual operations upon the developing mind of the evolutionary process, would go on thence and rob us of every religious doctrine and finally of all ultimate truth. There remain still rejoinders from that quarter which demand the attention of the Christian apologist. The outcome of that philosophy is materialism as to nature and man, and at best agnosticism as to God. But the contest has been now so well fought out in the arena of public discussion that we shall be justified in omitting any repetition of the Christian arguments here. Enough to remark that several of the most prominent advocates of Mr. Darwin's theories have come clearly to see,

with Prof. Romanes, that causes in nature do not evacuate the necessity of a cause of nature. Among the latest of these clearly to express himself may be mentioned Mr. John Fiske. The course of evolution itself demands a superintending Intelligence, working "immanently," as Prof. Le Conte phrases it, but not less really and intelligently for that. The cause of the world is a Person, when the last word of evolution has been spoken.

But we are still upon disputed ground, and need to protect ourselves against criticism from another quarter, if we wish to make our progress perfectly secure. Professor Kaftan, as was earlier remarked, is himself in a sense a theologian of experience; but he has repudiated the stand-point which he occupied in his earlier theological career, and sharply criticizes those who, like Frank, derive the dogmatic system of the church from religious experience. He would have many an objection to urge to the line of reasoning which we have now pursued. I deem it important to devote special attention to him not merely because he is one of the foremost of living theologians, and the leader of that general tendency of thought which goes by the name of Ritschlianism, but even more because his objections may seem to be suggested by his superior opportunities of judging of the real value of the experiential argument. His personal devoutness and the great theological advance made by

him upon Ritschl add to the reasons for special attention to whatever he may have to say.

The proof already delineated conforms entirely in one general aspect to the most important underlying principles of Kaftan. He lays great and due weight on the fact that the divine revelation is not, in the first instance, a revelation of truths, but the revelation of a person, the manifestation of God himself to man. Upon this, he says, must follow credence on the part of man, and then obedience by which man yields himself to the self-revealing God. In this conscious intercourse of obedience between God and man there springs up a knowledge of divine things, first among which is the knowledge of God himself. And Christian doctrine, says Kaftan, is at bottom the doctrine of God.

Now, that is precisely the method of gaining the idea of God adopted in the analysis of Christian experience which we have just completed. In the new birth the soul comes in contact with God who reveals himself to it in the regenerating act. The soul responding is brought by "obedience to the heavenly vision" into a new relation with God, and meditating on that relation, it comes to find by simple analysis that God is manifested there, and what he is manifested to be; and thus it comes to believe in him as the holy, Infinite, and loving Person, a God who is truly a Father.

But Kaftan would not pause in his criticism at

this point. He would detect a grave error heralded by the entire structure of our argument in its evident attempt to gain a definite and formulated knowledge of God by methods of the understanding. His objection goes very deep into the underlying problems of theology, and its due consideration will lead us far afield. But we shall be rewarded, when we have returned to the main course of our discussion again, by the conviction that little is likely to be brought against us at any later point more far-reaching or thorough-going in its antagonism to our principles.

The objection may be reduced to two brief expressions:

1. We do not really want the knowledge we seek.

What, asks Kaftan, is the highest good? Is it knowledge? So many have thought, especially the Greeks, whose philosophy culminated in Plato, and exercised a powerful influence upon the early church. It so modified the course of Christian thinking that the final outcome was that tendency which has reached its full development in Roman Catholicism, to exalt knowledge into the place of an essential element of salvation, —a good in itself. It was thus severed from right conduct, and religion was made to consist in the acceptance of dogmas and the performance of ceremonies which had no connection with the plain doing of our duty in the ordinary relations

of life. A chasm was thus opened between religion and morality, between the religion, that is, of this erring church and the religion of Jesus Christ, which consisted in the exercises of the heart and the consequent performance of the life, in loving God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. The longer this Greek conception of the highest good is studied, says Kaftan, the more it will be clear that it is erroneous and harmful to every department of thought and life.

What, then, is in truth the highest good for which men should seek? The history of the world is the history of struggle after the satisfaction of wants. Man has his desires, chief among which is that for fulness of life, the complete and perfect satisfaction of all his natural wants and the exercise of all his powers. The supreme good he seeks can be nothing less than this, for nothing else can give unity and consistency to history. "But there is nothing in the world which can afford this satisfaction. Everything here is relative and conditioned. This is true both of our knowledge and of everything in which we seek the satisfaction of our vital needs. True, we commonly think that some day the disillusionment which dogs us will come to an end." [1] But none, great or small, find themselves satisfied, or can. Now, two alternatives are thus

[1] I quote in this whole context, sometimes accurately and oftener loosely, from Kaftan's *"Wahrheit der christlichen Religion"*, p. 509 ff.

presented to man. On the one hand, he can despair of the world and embrace the philosophy of pessimism; but that is no solution of the difficulties of history, since it in fact declares that they are insoluble. Or, on the other hand, he can reach out towards another world in which the good which cannot be attained in this world may be sought.

But what shall this supermundane, highest good be? The need of it is developed in the history of man, and it must hence be such that human history shall be the positive means of bringing it into existence. Hence it can be only a moral good, a product to be gained by means of the real secret of human progress, by the distinctive element of human history, by the moral development which is the main achievement of the course of human affairs. Historical development creates conscience; and hence conscience must have part in this highest good. Conscience demands general love of men by which they are knit together in a society regulated by love as its law. The good of the individual must be steadily subordinated to the good of the whole. But such a society is not to be found in this world. And hence the religious element must be added to the other elements constituting the highest good, for we must believe in the existence somewhere of that which we cannot find upon earth. The highest good is thus both religious and

ethical. And these elements are united in the Christian conception of the kingdom of God.

This is a highly subjective process of construction, as we shall at once remark, and Kaftan himself candidly admits. Is it anything more than this? Can it give any proof of being objective also? Yes, says Kaftan, for it is the result at which the human race as a whole, and in the actual outcome of its development, has arrived. It is the universal human idea of the highest good, for history shows there can be no society and no high civilization, no culture, no progress, where men do not steadily subordinate the individual to the general good.

And yet it may be, for all that, a mere ideal. What proof has it of reality? And how can we say that there is a kingdom of God, a society beyond this present world, in which God, from whom the world came forth, has placed the culmination of the world's history, and where the law of love perfectly prevails? Kaftan's answer is that such a kingdom must exist if history is to be rational, and it is therefore "postulated." But this postulate involves another; for if there be a God and a divine moral order, then that fact must be made known by a divine act of self-revelation, or a revelation is to be postulated. And thus are given to us what he calls the elements of the "highest knowledge," God as the cause of the world and the kingdom of God as its goal. It is a "knowl-

edge" (*Erkennen*) obtained by an act of faith. No man can be compelled to believe it. But believing it, every man finds it rational. Therefore, says Kaftan, we do not want the knowledge (*Wissen*) at which the present lectures are evidently aiming, built up by the careful use of the categories of the understanding.

With much of this reasoning we are immediately at one. It is a great and most significant fact which Kaftan elaborates, that the moral development is the heart of the historical development of humanity, and that the conscience is the highest element of the moral development. Take ethics,—nay, take Christianity, out of the towering growth of European civilization, and like an oak whose heart has been burned out by lightning, it rots and falls. But we need something more than a mere postulate of the reality of the kingdom of God in which is included the reality of God himself. We are to commit ourselves to God, to sacrifice for him, "to venture all", as Kaftan elsewhere expresses it, "our life and our dearest possessions", on his existence and his fatherly providence; and there must be *knowledge* before there is such a committal of the man by the act of his will. The will moves in view of motives, and these approach it by the avenues of the emotions and the intellect. If God is not *known* as an object of trust, trust cannot be *exercised* in him.

Kaftan more than half acknowledges this when

he proceeds to postulate revelation. God *must* make himself *known;* and this revelation must be *believed* to be in history, or else it is all unintelligible. So says Kaftan. Rather, say we, this revelation must be received, and the self-revealing object be known through the experience. It will never satisfy the world to tell them that here is a truth which, if one sees it so, is so, but which one may refuse to see and which, so far as he is concerned, will then not be! And it will never satisfy the Christian to tell him that his certainty is a certainty of mere belief. He needs, and, as I think we have abundantly shown, he possesses, a *knowledge* which is a ground of faith as well as the offspring of faith, and not merely a simple faith. He need not strive to content himself with a "knowledge" (*Erkennen*) which is no knowledge (*Wissen*).

But, says Kaftan—and this is his other point—

2. However much we may want such knowledge (*Wissen*), we cannot have it.

Your reasoning in the above derivation of the existence of God from the experiences involved in the new birth, he says, is not a mere analysis of the facts and a consequent recognition of the self-revelation of God in those experiences, but it is an argument conducted on a false basis, for you are arguing from effect to cause and are thus employing the principle of causality beyond the sphere of its legitimate application. It is restricted by its nature to the sphere of ex-

perience, and can never prove the existence of a cause beyond experience for the phenomena within experience.

This sounds quite like Kant, and we begin to summon from their hiding places those old arguments by which sound philosophy long ago disposed of Kant's limitation of causality to phenomena,—a limitation which he could not himself consistently maintain. But Kaftan is not building exactly upon Kant's foundations. He derives far more from a philosopher whom, in the town where James McCosh lived and taught, I may claim without fear of contradiction, English philosophy has long since refuted,—I mean John Stuart Mill. Causation, says Kaftan, is an idea which we arbitrarily impose upon phenomena for our own convenience in gaining domination over the world. All that we perceive is succession in events. We wish to know what successions we can depend upon in order that we may subject nature to our control for our own selfish purposes. We are conscious of causality in the spiritual sphere of our own inner life, and we project this arbitrarily upon phenomena, and say that so and so is the cause of so and so, that we may the more distinctly mark the reliable certainty with which one phenomenon succeeds another. Further than that there is no causality in the world; and to think that we are actually gaining a real knowledge of the world by the application to it of this principle,

is a great error. Atoms, and evolutionary hypotheses, and the much vaunted "laws of nature" are likewise mere matters of our own convenience, arbitrarily attributed to things, and have no reality in themselves and no value beyond their use in enabling man to dominate nature and employ it for his own purposes.

We shall all have two things to say in reply, I think. First, this is a very low and false view of the object of natural science. Doubtless it has its practical bearings, and to a large extent is intended to promote man's dominion over nature; but it has also higher objects, principal among which is the knowledge of truth. Kaftan believes in God as the cause of the world. Is it conceivable that he should be this, and not have left imprinted upon every page of the world and ready for the reading of qualified minds, the record of his methods, which will also be the record of his own nature? Certainly, men are studying nature in order to "think God's thoughts after him", as Kepler said; and they have thought that from that despised theory of evolution which Kaftan dismisses almost with a sneer, they gained new views of the grandeur, perfection, and wide-spreading efficiency of the divine plan. I think we may increasingly say that, if the "undevout astronomer is mad", the undevout biologist, who is permitted to linger in the very sanctuaries where life is evolving and to watch it with the microscope, that eye which modern

science has given him and which beholds the very ultimates of life, the cells,—who may thus almost see the hand of God at work as he fashions life,—the undevout biologist must be incapable of reverence. No! the highest service of science is that it gives us, not dominion over the world, but insight into it, and insight into the processes of eternity and the ways of God,—in a word, knowledge, which Kaftan says we cannot gain.

Kaftan seems to see this, for he has one passage in which he tries to lift this low conception of science upon a higher level. "This practical aim of science is before all things spiritual dominion over the world, which we must in some degree possess in order to become and to be spiritual persons. It is the position of the race of man in the universe which enables it to lift itself above the world and to direct its gaze upon an eternal goal. There is therefore not the slightest depreciation of science or derogation from its dignity when it is viewed as a means to this end." [1] Yes, if science helps us thus, it teaches us of God. But can it, under Kaftan's ideas of its methods? Can it, if the great principle of causality is nothing but a fiction, a short way of expressing to ourselves that we expect a certain thing to-morrow when a given antecedent shall be put in motion, because it followed the same to-day, an "arbitrary" application of idea to

[1] "*Wahrheit*", p. 325.

phenomena, introducing an "illusion" (*Täuschung*), a "naïve" transfer of facts of our own nature to the external world, making that world "a complicated web of artificial causes and effects"?[1] In truth, Kaftan's idea of natural science remains a low one and altogether unworthy of the great structure of human knowledge which has been erected by its skilful labors.

Second, we say that Kaftan's idea of causation is not the one with which natural science operates. The youngest and most "naïve" student ascribes to causality the idea of power; and the ultimate results of scientific study lay emphasis on force as operative in phenomena. It is by the study of forces, in fact, that science has come to its greatest generalizations and its greatest contributions to human thought.

But this subject has been thoroughly discussed among English-speaking philosophers and theologians in connection with the writings of that eminent man, who has become among us, in spite of his real eminence and genuine services to thought, metaphysically considered, a rejected and now almost forgotten leader. Prof. Kaftan cannot expect us to take very seriously his attempt at this late date to revive the authority of J. S. Mill. We put it down as the self-evident basis of Kaftan's labors as well as of our own, that man is made for knowledge; that the fundamental principles which he must employ in the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 333.

search for knowledge are necessary to him because they have their counterpart in the reality which he is to know; and that hence the marks of necessity and universality that are upon them are evidences of their applicability to the entire world of possible thought. Even Kaftan carries causality beyond the world of experience, for he "postulates" a Cause of the eternal kingdom of good beyond this world; and what is that "postulating" but the utterance of the fact that such a kingdom, and any rational outcome of the history of a finite and dependent being like man, demands a Power to establish and conduct it? Even Kant had a "*Ding-an-sich*" which was the cause of phenomenal reality.

But we are in danger, as I hinted, of being led too far afield. I shall therefore pass over the other features of this strange theory of knowledge upon which Kaftan has seen fit to base his employment of the Scriptures as the sole source of Christian theology, to the intended and emphatic exclusion of experience. I can only mention the remarkable turn which he gives to the reply to his adversaries on innate principles of knowledge. He conceives them as citing Mathematics against him as a wholly *a priori* and yet absolutely certain science. His answer at least does not lack boldness. "The propositions of Mathematics", he says, "are truths only in an hypothetical manner, that is, under the supposition that there are things to which they can be

applied"![1] And he follows Mill in the absurd statement that the ideal forms of geometry are derived from the approximate circles, etc., of nature by exaggeration of certain qualities! Why did he not complete the catalogue of Mill's absurdities here by approving his supposition that upon the planet Jupiter, for example, parallel lines prolonged would meet, and two and two make five? I therefore abruptly break off the discussion at this point. We shall return to Kaftan's positions at a later time, and review in another connection certain objections which he might urge against the use of creeds and of history in general both in this and in the following lecture.

We have thus completed our survey of the first cycle of truths falling under our theme, viz., those resulting from the fact of the new birth as experienced by the individual Christian. We are now to pass to other elements of his experience, less central to it and often yielding a certainty of an inferior degree. But before we go we should pause to remark that the elements of doctrine already secured carry with them the entire system of doctrine commonly called evangelical by their logical implications and by the necessities of any thinking which proceeds upon the supposition of the unity of all truth and of its consistency both with itself and with the laws of thought. It will be the office of all the following discussion to sub-

[1] "*Wahrheit*", p. 369.

stantiate this remark, and it will therefore be unadvisable to attempt to display now the necessary connection of the doctrines of the sin and ruin of the world, of the preveniency of grace and justification by faith, with the other doctrines of the system. But this observation should be made; that no historical communion has held these doctrines without holding the rest, and none has denied the others and succeeded in maintaining these. Indeed, the circle might be contracted upon its center, and it might be said that with the maintenance of the doctrine of prevenient grace the evangelical system stands or falls. It was not without an inner logical necessity that Rome, departing from the evangelical system at other points, pelagianized at this. And at the other extreme, those communions which have rejected the Trinity and the eternity of the judgment awards have felt no sympathy with the Augustinian theology that all good comes from God.

We have thus already gained the central point of our study and laid bare the central and determinative elements of that Christian system which is to develop from it. What we shall hereafter do, will, therefore, have the double character of an enlargement and a confirmation of what has gone before.

LECTURE III

SOURCES OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE OF THE INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN

I FEAR that I must to-day make an especial demand upon the patience and the powers of my audience. Having analyzed Christian experience and found there the great fundamental doctrines of the divine existence and the divine agency in the renewal of men, you will be anxious, if the discussion has already gained that hold upon your interest which its intrinsic importance deserves, to press on to a further examination of the positive doctrinal contributions of experience. But we shall be compelled to turn aside from the direct development of our theme for the consideration of formal matters, of questions of source and value, and for enquiry and criticism. We shall not thereby depart from the object which we have set before us. This was methodological as well as constructive, to determine, first, that Christian experience could contribute to doctrine, and how its voice was to be arrived at, and only then to ask what it had thus actually contributed. We may therefore be content to gird up our minds to a strenuous effort at this time, knowing that if our path seems to lie in less pleasant regions, it is

yet leading us forward, and that our labor is essential to secure the soundness of our processes and results. And, I may add, to keep our fainting spirits in courage by the way, that even these less attractive moments will serve to add a new and very important contribution to the system of truth from experience which could be attained by no shorter method.

Christian experience, as we have been considering it up to the present point, has been principally a matter of the individual consciousness. We have consulted it by the simple process of introspection, each for himself. On one occasion, however, we were led to recognize the possibility of subjective error as to what might be genuine Christian experience at any point, and we made our appeal to the general experience of Christians by an examination of the expressions of the great creeds upon the topic in hand, which was prevenient grace. We justified our course then with the simple remark that the creeds, as products of common action or as securing general assent in some important communion, might well serve to indicate the crystallization of sentiment among a considerable number of Christians as to the points they cover. We are now to pass out of the sphere of the immediate consciousness of the Christian into the less restricted sphere of his larger life, and the word experience is now to take on the wider signification of the entire verification of

Christian truth in all the complex tests which life applies to it. The more remote experience thus becomes from our own immediate consciousness, the less direct are our means of determining what it is and the greater the difficulty in giving it a sufficient and accurate examination. And, if the danger of subjective error grows less in one respect as we leave our own personality in the background, it becomes greater in another as we come into the region where the fancies and fallacies of other minds may exert an undue influence over us. We begin the critical study thus thrust upon us, of the sources of information as to experience and the canons by which we are to decide what its true deliverances are, with a recurrence to the historical origin of the Christian religion.

The first, and incomparably the most important experience of Christian truth which was ever had was that which was enjoyed by the twelve disciples who gathered about our Lord Jesus Christ, and among all the influences exerted by his immediate presence, and, when that had been withdrawn, under the promised guidance of the Spirit of Truth, incorporated in their spiritual natures the teachings they had received from the Son of God. Not less remarkable and scarcely less important was the experience of that other apostle who, as "one born out of due time", received his gospel "not from man, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ". The experience of this group of first possessors and witnesses to Chris-

tian truth has been handed down to us in their own and other writings, embodied for us in the New Testament. The first, and ever the supreme source of Christian experience outside of the individual consciousness will therefore be the New Testament, or, since the New is not fully intelligible without the Old, and since some elements of Christian experience are elements of a more general experience, and actually antedate the coming of our Lord in the history of God's people, we may say, more fully, the Bible.

We thus first come in contact with the Bible in this study as a record of the earliest Christian experience. As such, it is at once to be received as in a large degree normative in discussions of Christianity according to the historical canon first emphasized in recent times by Ritschl, that in an historical movement its purest form will be found represented in the documents in which it was set forth at the beginning.

I know that this canon will be immediately disputed by the advocates of a merely evolutionary philosophy. They will say that the truest form of any historical movement lies at the end, not at the beginning. The beginning is often small, poor, little indicative of what is to come; while the end, the finished product, embodies most perfectly the real forces at work from the first, but incapable of revealing themselves fully in their first undifferentiated exercise. That may be true of a merely natural process; but we have al-

ready shown that Christianity is not a purely natural process. It begins in any individual soul with the touch of God. In history at large it must have begun thus, for all Christians are made such in the same way, and only as there were a number of Christians, of exceptionally vigorous experience, produced together, could Christianity have begun its historic course. Something like a day of Pentecost is demanded as the beginning of any such thing as Christianity has proved itself to be. The supernatural origin of Christianity, therefore, justifies the canon in this case. Its original form will be pure. In this sense, though with deeper justification than Ritschl gave, do we accept his canon.

The Bible, then, is an original and very important witness to Christian experience. Simply on this ground, if on no other, its words are to be treated by us with the greatest respect. But, as soon as we begin to consider it more closely, we find its utterances varied in their character and requiring some discrimination in their use. It contains records of experiences lying in the sphere of immediate consciousness, such as the conversion of Paul or the repentance of Peter; and here we have evidently testimony which is not of essentially different character from that given to-day by Christians who pass through similar experiences. It contains also records of observed facts, such as the life of our Lord, "coruscating with miracles, succumbing to injuries";

the progress of the church under the gift and guiding presence of the Holy Spirit; and accounts further, of what I may call divine facts, which, if known at all, could only be known by communications from God, such as the pre-existence of Christ and the awards of the judgment day. Then explanations of these things are added, sometimes by communicating other divine facts, as when the pre-existence of Christ is explained by the eternal existence of the Logos with God, and sometimes by suggestions of great principles, as when the death of Christ is referred to his priestly office by which he is both priest and victim, and this office to eternal considerations lying in the nature and law of God. Thus there comes to be taught a vast body of doctrine, some of which is remote from the utterances of any human consciousness, but all of which belongs in some degree, nearer or remoter, to the experience of these first disciples and is a part of their precious gift to the church. And, finally, there are multitudes of recorded impressions and of suggestions and glimpses of truth, of confessed limitations, of astonishing and well-nigh unbounded claims, which are part of the general impression which the disciples gathered as they passed on in the Christian course, and which have value in varying degree for us. All of these elements add complexity to the testimony of the Bible to the contents of Christian experience and present to the investigator the important question as to what

he is to regard as a genuine portion of original Christian experience and how far he can use it in the determination of what is true. In other words, the criticism of the contents of Christian experience begins as soon as the enquirer passes the limits of his own consciousness. Other criticism might be included here, as for example, the historical criticism of the age, origin, integrity, and internal reliability of the New Testament books; but this the limitation of our time compels us to leave unexamined. We may leave it the more readily because there is a sufficiently general acceptance of the picture given of our Lord in the four gospels as correct and a sufficiently complete view of the theology of Paul in the four undisputed epistles. Minor matters we are not concerned with. In the face of so much agreement as we may presuppose on the New Testament itself, our sole question is, What shall we do with this New Testament as a document of Christian experience? The simple canon that the New Testament will be found a source of Christian experience, and in some large degree a normative source, proves insufficient in view of the actual multiplicity of the phenomena. What is experience here, and what something else? Is all of equal value? And, particularly, in respect to matters in which my experience fails, has the Bible anything of value to teach me? and does it there, or anywhere, possess a true authority in the religious sphere?

Ritschl's canon will be found incapable of answering these questions. The Ritschlian school exercises a constant criticism on the experiential and doctrinal contents of the New Testament so as well nigh to deprive it of all doctrinal authority. In the sphere of what is delivered by the immediate consciousness there is less question, since there can be little, although even here the appreciation of the Scripture is hindered by Ritschl's failure to recognize distinctly the new birth as the ultimate Christian fact. On such a doctrine, for example, as the pre-existence of Christ, Ritschl himself preserves a reticent attitude, on the ground that pre-existence is a matter of no "interest" to the Christian; but Beyschlag, who may be reckoned for substance of doctrine to the Ritschlian school, seeks to evacuate Jesus' own words recorded by John by explaining them as figurative ways of expressing the conception that he was in perfect accord with God. Paul's clear statements of pre-existence are said to be his private theoretical explanations of the fact of Christ's exaltation and reign. We shall, no doubt, have occasion to recur to the details of these exegetical peculiarities later; enough now to remark that they are a denial of all authority on the part of the New Testament writers to teach us the truth of God, or even to give an unquestioned account of the original Christian experience. When they tell us something which can be corroborated from our own experience,

they are to be followed, in this view; otherwise not. They are, in fact, rendered almost superfluous.

In spite of all this, Ritschl laid great emphasis upon the idea of revelation, and deserves the credit of having set forth with more clearness than most of his contemporaries the fact that Christianity is distinctly a religion of revelation. Kaftan's position upon this point has been already stated. Revelation is the second of his fundamental "postulates" and an essential element of the knowledge gained through the exercise of the practical reason. He has the advantage over Ritschl of much less arbitrariness of method and of far greater faithfulness to the objective results of careful exegesis. As the best representative of the present point attained by the school of Ritschl, he may justly claim a larger share of our attention.

In the "*Dogmatik*" Kaftan treats the topic of revelation in the introductory chapters.[1] With much that he says evangelical theologians will most heartily agree. Revelation is not the communication of abstract truths in the form of scientific propositions, but the contact of God with the soul. The Bible is therefore not an abstract, external authority apart from all spiritual receptivity in the Christian. Yet there is in the Bible an element of instruction in truth, and this is an "essential element." It contains a "revelation of

[1] I quote here more or less exactly from pages 31 ff.

the will and essence of God". And it is, further, essential to Christianity that the revelation of God should become individual to the single Christian, or that, in some way, that original revelation made of God through Jesus Christ and now for us comprised in the Bible should be communicated to the individual as a living and personal contact of God with him afresh. This is effected by the gift of the Holy Spirit, who vivifies the scriptural record and applies it, so that the awakened soul comes to an understanding of it and finds God in it. Hence the order of spiritual events is: (1) the historical revelation of God by Jesus of Nazareth; (2) The individual application of this in inner revelation by the Holy Spirit; (3) faith; (4) obedience; (5) knowledge of the truth.[1]

Now, this "faith" is faith in Jesus Christ, who is the person in whom the revelation, thus applied by the Holy Spirit, is made. "Revelation and faith," says Kaftan,[2] "belong together. The intended object of revelation is faith, and faith in the religious sense of the word can come into being only when some real or supposed revelation of God is found. Also, the understanding of the one term is to be gained only from the other; and we have to take our departure from the idea of faith since this is the nearer, the more directly known. Now, Christian faith is present whenever a man passes through those experiences

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 38,cf. pp. 23, 25, 31.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

which center about the two facts of the atonement and the kingdom of God. It is from these experiences that the Christian's knowledge of the essence and the will of God comes. . . . . And when we analyze faith, we find that, according to its own inner logic, revelation is the preceding and constitutive of the two facts. . . . Faith arises through the word of revelation in which the Spirit works, therefore it arises as an effect produced by the Spirit." And later he adds: "Revelation and faith have an inner relation to one another, but we must now bring into the treatment of the topic the significance of the Scriptures. It is the revelation of God witnessed in the Scriptures of which all the above is true. If revelation is cause and faith effect, revelation must precede faith and be independent of it. This is secured by referring to the Holy Scriptures as the word of God, in which and through which the Spirit of God works faith in men from time to time, and so brings the revelation to individual men." Thus at last, though not primarily and directly, the Bible brings knowledge of divine things to men.

It will thus be seen that Kaftan fully accepts the reality of revelation in Jesus Christ and of the Bible as the great medium of bringing that revelation to us, and that he also accepts, though somewhat haltingly, the authority of the Bible in matters of Christian knowledge. His defective theory of knowledge, which we have examined

earlier, prevents him from gaining all from this position which he should. His theological method is to employ the Bible as determinative in respect to the great controlling ideas of the faith and then seek by an independent analysis of these to arrive at a consistent body of truth. Minute biblical justification of his ideas he does not aim at. He has the decided merit of having held fast to the idea that the authority of the Bible is to be approached from the side of experience; but he has failed to develop this argument and so to afford any ground for its authority essentially better than his original "postulation" of the reality of revelation. While in his results he has passed far beyond Ritschl, he has made little gain in giving us a sound foundation for a doctrine of the authority of the Scriptures.

We must therefore proceed in our investigation of our question without much help from Kaftan. Have the Scriptures authority in matters of doctrine? The true question at issue here is one of the most fundamental. Taking as our example that doctrine already mentioned, the preexistence of Christ, the question whether the plain meaning of Christ's own words is to be accepted as true, or rejected, as by Beyschlag, by means of violent exegesis which makes them the expression of the conception that beneath his personality, as its ultimate ground, was the very being of God,—this is a question emphasized rather than answered by Kaftan. If it is the New Tes-

tament Scriptures which the Holy Spirit applies to man, furnishing him thereby such knowledge of the essence and will of God as leads him to faith and the new life, and if the same Holy Spirit employs the same New Testament in the further development of Christian piety, then God speaks to-day through this book; and when God speaks, he speaks with authority. Kaftan does not occupy the hesitant or negative position of Ritschl and Beyschlag as to the pre-existence of Christ. He recognizes it as an element of truth used in the edification of Christians, if not in the original development of their faith. But, after all, he gives us no ground, no precise and adequate ground, for biblical authority. It still remains a problem rather than an established fact.

The question is therefore forced upon us, Can anything better be done for this theme than has been done by these two great men who have sought with new earnestness to found Christianity and Christian theology upon revelation? In reply, we first raise the question as to the possibility of any revelation at all, for this is the fundamental question.

Now, this general question is already settled for the Christian by the deliverances of his primary experience. When he comes to know God as personally operative in the world for his salvation, he has the certainty that any personal operation of God which may be necessary for the spiritual good of man is both possible and probable.

As he knows God more fully, and recognizes in him the Creator of the Universe, he sets no bounds to the divine power, as he cannot to the divine benevolence. Any form of the supernatural is therefore to be granted possible because of the nature and character of God. Certainly God, who made the world, has not fallen a victim to his own contrivances, nor are his laws, the established method of his operation, objective entities which control his action, and render other ways of operating impossible. If Jesus Christ claims to be a pre-existent being come from heaven for man's salvation, the only attitude possible for one who has learned the initial lessons of experience is that of inquiry as to the tokens offered in substantiation of so great a claim, not of immediate and irremovable scepticism as to its possibility.

But the greater thing will not be done if the less is not. If there is no such thing as revelation to apostles and prophets, there will be no coming of a pre-existent Christ. The question, therefore, resolves itself, as already implied, into one as to the reality of all revelation. Upon this experience has a direct word to say. The Christian knows that God led him personally to thoughts and feelings resulting in a great change of will at the beginning of his religious life. More than this, he recognizes divine leading at many critical junctures of life. When great decisions are to be made, or a great truth must be

conceived if his course is still to be right and divinely led, the same train of argument from the assemblage of facts and events about him as was reviewed when we were considering the fundamental crisis of his life, leads him to the conclusion that God personally teaches and guides him now. Pious men have felt this in business, in invention, in statesmanship, in the affairs of the church, and have gratefully acknowledged the divine hand in their thoughts as well as in their acts. This is the essence and irresolvable element of all revelation. Revelation is the personal communication of thought to the soul by God. Let the objective method be never so clear and impressive, yet the subjective perception must follow, or the revelation is not made. When entire uncertainty broods over the method, the fact may be quite clear. The Christian apologist who was contending only for the ultimate essentials, and was ready to concede every unessential element that he might the more vigorously defend the essential, might declare himself contented if after every objective channel of revelation,—voice, vision, or miraculous sign,—had been explained as the projection upon the screen of sense of the image of that which had its only existence in the secret center of the soul, this was left undisputed, that God might personally guide men's thoughts to things otherwise imperceptible to them, and that they might recognize the personal Presence through the character of the

thought conveyed by it, or through the method of its approach. When the first thought came to some Hebrew singer that the wrath of God against Israel was but another side of his mercy, that disaster was not an unmixed evil, and not even the captivity an utter desertion of the nation by God, that the covenant was indeed an everlasting covenant, and the recovery of Israel the work of God and not the clever achievement of man; that profound thought, shining by its own light, illuminating the recesses of a mysterious past, exalting the soul to new faith and devoted exertion, and opening vistas along which the fulfillment of promises made of old to Abraham might be seen already advancing, needed little from without to convince the thrilled prophet that he was in the presence of a self-revealing God. And even if Paul had seen no objective vision and heard no objective voice on the way to Damascus, if the truth simply were that his obstinate mind, bent on persecution, and occupied by no gentle meditations upon the Man of Galilee, was suddenly seized by an invasion of tumultuous thought, that fact after fact and proof after proof that Jesus was the Messiah were arrayed before his reflection, till the conclusion that he whom he persecuted was truly Christ and Lord burst out of the storm-laden and murky atmosphere of his Jewish prejudices in a flash of blinding illumination, that would have been for him a thought of no subjective origin, derived in no degree from

his environment, but divine in its source as in its nature.

The actual limitations put by the Ritschlian school on the voice of the New Testament witness to Christian experience are therefore unnecessary. But they are inconsistent with what is actually admitted to be reliable, as all such subjective criticism is in danger of being because of its necessarily arbitrary character. If the New Testament is the primitive record of Christian experience, and thus of prime importance in its interpretation, then every element of the testimony must be given its appropriate weight, apart from the suggestions of a false and anti-Christian philosophy. To permit the apostles to testify to the facts of the life of Christ and to be the vehicles to us of some of the most vital religious truths, which have since revolutionized the world, but to refuse them all opportunity to express their convictions as to the meaning of those facts and to deny their declaration of the divine origin of just those doctrines which have proved most effective in the production of the historical revolution, such as the Incarnation, is to play fast and loose with the book and the original Christian experience itself. Kaftan, as we have seen, has mended much of this. Merely as an historical document, much more as what it is, the New Testament deserves better treatment.

But it is more than an historical document, and more than what Kaftan has found it to be. We

have seen that a better foundation is needed for the authority of the Scriptures than he succeeded in providing, and now it becomes incumbent upon us to seek ourselves to provide it.

The Bible, we say, is more than merely an historical document; it partakes of the divinity of its doctrines. This follows so:—

The Christian has acquired through his Christian experience insight into the character of this book. He recognizes its divinity. He has himself learnt by experience the great truths of sin and consequent ruin, of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, of the prevenient grace of God, and of justification by faith. Those doctrines are not only true and divine but divinely conveyed to him, because all his experience is divinely wrought experience. He judges that only on the path of a divinely wrought experience can the knowledge of these truths come to him or any one. They cannot be so delivered from one man to another that he shall be able in consequence to utter them with knowledge. But the Bible has them, and holds them with the perfect certainty of indisputable conviction. It knows; and its knowledge, like that of the modern Christian, is God-given. God speaking in the experience of the writers of the Bible, speaks in the book itself. It is God's word.

This is an argument not reduced by the common Christian, nor always by the trained theologian, to logical form. The Reformers, face to

face with the vaunted testimony of the church to the Scriptures, called it the testimony of the Spirit (*testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*)[1] But it is easily brought under the categories of logic. It is an argument from identity of effects, the doctrines of experience and the doctrines of the Bible, to identity of cause, the same God in the Bible through experience as in my own conscious experience. As such, it is an argument applying with different force to different elements in the Bible. For the central doctrines of the Bible, which are the same as those whose

[1] I have been criticised for saying elsewhere that the argument here presented is the Reformation doctrine of the "testimony of the Spirit". It has been said that that was the doctrine that Christians under the illumination of the Holy Spirit were enabled to perceive at once the divinity of the Bible. The Spirit rectified the organs of spiritual vision so that Christians could now see the truth. That is a correct statement of the Reformers' position. But the Reformers stated the doctrine without giving any hint of its rationale, probably without understanding what the rationale is. Their utterances are all figurative and need explanation. There is, in fact, nothing here like "vision". The truth of doctrines can be perceived only by the perception of their agreement with other truth already known. Hence the doctrine needs to be brought to a better statement than the Reformers gave it; and this statement, I think, has been given in the text. This doctrine is the Reformation doctrine in the sense that it puts in a reasonable and intelligible form what the Reformers put in a figurative and unintelligible form. Compare Stearns, "Evidence of Christian Experience", pp. 303, 304.

genesis in experience we have already followed, it is of the most direct application and the most cogent character. The Bible in its central and determinative elements is the word of God, that is, the channel by which he still speaks to men. So much the proof directly and positively covers.

But it covers still more in consequence of the natural implications of what has been thus gained. The elements of its doctrine already reviewed have been called determinative; and they are so. They constitute the peculiar Christian view of the world as the creation of a good God, debased to become a kingdom of evil, in which God in his love is erecting the kingdom of heaven by saving processes set in motion by his personal activity. Such ideas must be dominating. Let any thinker have them, and we shall know what the rest of his philosophy of divine things will be. If right here, the Bible may be assumed to be right everywhere, and this by a reasonable assumption, not liable to be subsequently overthrown.

But there is another argument, which must wait for a full presentation till we have carried our study farther, but which, by an anticipation to be made good later, we may now introduce for the sake of completeness. We are soon to come to matters of Christian doctrine also known to the Christian experimentally though possessing a degree of certainty inferior to that possessed by the elements already developed. These are also

found in the Bible; and the argument is the same. Identity of effect proves identity of cause. God-wrought experience proves a God-wrought Bible. Some of these truths are also determinative, as the divinity of Christ; and hence their proving force as to the Bible reaches further than the parts of it in which they are found. The argument grows as experience grows till at last there remains very little in the Bible that is not quite directly covered by it. The Bible as a whole is the word of God, the effective channel conveying his truth.

Time fails fully to buttress and defend this argument now; but enough must be taken for two objections, which will be unfailingly put:—

1. It may be said: Christian experience is formed by the Bible. Of course, therefore, it agrees with the Bible; but its agreement is no proof of the Bible's truth. Dependent on it, experience must agree with it, right or wrong. We reply, No! Experience is occasioned by the Bible, called forth, elicited by the Bible: but it is independent. Descartes may have called my attention to the argument for my existence from the fact of thought; but when I say: "I think, therefore I am," I know my existence not by gift of Descartes, but by the independent testimony of my own consciousness. Whatever occasioned the new birth in my soul, if I have it, I know it, and I know what is involved in it independently of all other beings and things. And I reason in

the above delineated argument from this independent knowledge.

2. It may be objected again: Your argument has proving force only so far as experience goes, and hence can never prove the authority of the whole Bible, or give any true authority. True, we reply, there can be no result in the conclusion which was not in the premises, and these being experiential, tell nothing about what is beyond experience. But the argument does cover the Bible as a whole, if not the whole Bible; and it gives it this degree of authority, that the Bible is true as far as I can test it, and is therefore to be believed still further, if there is no contrary evidence. Is not that authority?

We shall recur to this last objection again. For the present we pass on to remark: Such is the Bible which experience gives us. The line of argument here followed is not the only line that can be followed, and not necessarily the best. Let us not claim for it more than it will bear, and let us not descend to comparisons and contentions. But now, the serious question will be put, Has not experience by creating a biblical authority deposed itself as a source of doctrine?

Kaftan abandoned experience as a source of theology in favor of the authority of revelation. "Theology," he says, "has only to unfold a given truth," not to discover it, and not to defend it. With this better derivation of the biblical authority, must not the Bible be made the source

of theology to the exclusion of experience? Why draw from a fountain which confessedly may be tainted with subjectivism when the untainted fountain of God's word is pouring forth so abundantly its crystal purity?

We reply that, so far as this argument is concerned, experience, as already said, needs to be pushed much further before the argument is complete. To pause here with experience because experience has given you a perfect source of doctrine in the Bible would be to pause before experience has accomplished that task. We must remember that we have "anticipated" the argument, which still waits for its actual justification. And, again, we are not asking whether experience is a source of doctrine of higher or lower value, better or worse than the Bible. Enough that it is a source: let us see what it gives us. "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety." It may be of value to have another witness beside the Bible, even if this is unimpeachable.

We have thus gained, as was intimated at the beginning of the discussion we should, more than we sought. We sought to know whether the Bible was a source of Christian experience upon which we might rely for the correction of our individual aberrations. We have gained an answer to this question and more. We now know that the experiential utterances of the Bible must be normative, for they were the product of the oper-

ation of God upon the minds of holy men. But we also recognize the Bible as the word of God, and thus have derived the doctrine of biblical authority. This is a new and a very important contribution of experience to the system of doctrine. We mark the contribution as we proceed in our study.

We must still linger in the region of the formal, but it will be for but one cycle of investigation more. We shall then be able to proceed steadily with the remaining portions of our constructive work.

There is one great source of Christian experience remaining, and as we pass to it we shall be struck immediately with the contrasts which it presents to the Bible, by which the worth of the Bible will be indefinitely magnified. This source is the experience of the church, which is the assembly of those in whom Christianity has been at work and through whom it has produced its effects upon the world since the New Testament period. It forms with the Bible that general body of Christian experience to which, we have already seen, appeal must be made to guard against the possible errors of a purely subjective investigation. It is for our present purpose embodied in the results of the critical history of Christian theology.

The history of doctrine is a source of the testimony of Christian experience because doctrine

grows out of experience as thought grows out of life.

When we pass out of the New Testament into the earliest Christian writers, we become conscious, as just suggested, of the lower level on which the thought is moving. As the twelve disciples could not rise to the full understanding or appreciation of their Master, the members and leaders of the first churches could not maintain the level of the inspired apostles. Their thought is less lofty, less consistent, less broad in its range, less profound. The first of them, the writer of the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles", deals with ethical and liturgical questions, and with matters of church order; but all is simple, concrete, untheological. Ignatius, the martyr who travelled from Antioch to Rome and recorded his thoughts as he went in letters to various churches, has no proper theology. Even so important and immediately practical a doctrine as justification by faith may be clearly expressed upon one page and obscured or denied upon another by any one of these writers, as is actually done by Clement of Rome. There is abundant evidence of evangelical piety in all these earliest literary productions of the church, which element is undoubtedly the reason why they have been preserved. Ignatius could die for his Master, and recognizes his lordship by many phrases of profound significance. Polycarp could refuse to deny him. Even the

"Teaching" breathes the Johannine atmosphere. But piety has not yet flowered into theology. Christian thinking is still rudimentary and inconsistent, its various elements are unadjusted, and it needs the fire of some great emergency to fuse its separate truths into an harmonious system. The unity of the Christian life, from the moment when Peter preached repentance to the multitude at Pentecost in Jerusalem to the time when the old man met Justin by the sea and directed his attention to the Scriptures, is plainly exhibited; but the grounds of that unity are not set forth, and evidently not theologically understood.

But Christian piety tended from the beginning towards theological statement. We trace three distinct lines of influence operating in this direction; one, the influence of the intellectual nature of man which, driven by its native springs of action, seeks to analyze all its knowledge and reduce it to first principles; a second, the practical necessity to the propagation of the faith that missionaries should themselves understand what they seek to communicate to others; and a third, the intellectual crisis introduced by the first contact of the church with Greek thought when it was seen to be necessary to justify before the thinking of the world that system which as surely sought to dominate the mind of man as it did his will. Christianity could neither maintain itself before the world nor in the forum of its own consciousness except it gained a consistent view of

its intellectual principles, unless, in other words, it developed a theology.

When one glances down the vista of this developing Christian thought, he is impressed with the fact that there are many successive critical points in the history. As the inrushing tide advances from the ocean in successive waves, so successive masses of doctrine are borne in from the great infinite of the divine truth upon the recipient soul of man. About the persons of Athanasius, Leo, Augustine, Luther and others, centered discussions which added materially by their outcome to the treasure of articulated Christian knowledge. While these discussions differed as to their subject matter, and as to their importance to Christian theology, they were alike in the great features of formal development. In every case they had their roots in the remotest past, and especially in the teachings of the New Testament; they were preceded by a period in which every element of the final outcome may be traced, suspended, as it were, in solution, or, to speak more literally, unadjusted to other elements, and often uncomprehended in its necessary implications; they were conducted by a controversy in which different parties represented different theoretical explanations of admitted facts or different aspects of truth often with the passion of men who thought that with them and their doctrine the church "stood or fell"; they resulted each in a settlement, substantially by the common consent

of the participating church, though sometimes formally by the influence of some overshadowing personality or assembly; and they were always followed by a period of appropriation, in which their results were slowly incorporated in the thinking of the great universal church. In all the process so described we perceive the stately operation of innate vital forces, the evolution of opinion upon the significance of facts long since known, through the process of comprehensive intellectual examination by a multitude of minds.

The element of succession is not without a marked significance. Doctrines not only come after doctrines, but the subsequent doctrines are built upon the preceding. It might be said, the later are unfolded from the earlier. Each strengthens the proof of the preceding, and each when accepted becomes a fresh starting-point for the development of all that follow. There is therefore a genuine evolution of doctrine out of doctrine, and of all the doctrines out of life. Theology leads to Christology, Christology to Anthropology, and Anthropology to Soteriology, as each becomes a living question to the living church.

How now are the utterances of "Christian experience" to be derived from such a history? Precisely speaking, we get here, of course, Christian convictions, the products of experience in varying degrees and ways, and not the experience

itself. Some of these convictions are derivable by very short processes from veritable experiences, while others require longer trains of reasoning, and are therefore less certain. They are, however, the verdict of Christians in general on the points touched, and thus the final testimony of the general church as to Christian truth, compounded of immediate experiences, of the reasonable explanation of perceived facts, of the logical adjustment of differing ideas, and of the result of experiment with supposed truth. And when we distinguish between the various convictions which we find recorded in history, when we ask for that verdict which has Christian history for it, and which may therefore be called the true historical verdict of Christendom, we are asking for the legitimate outcome of the historical development.

We must, therefore, ask at some point before we begin to make use of Christian history as a source of information as to experience, what are the criteria of a sound historical development? Cardinal Newman, who sought in his famous book upon "The Development of Christian Doctrine" to use the idea of development in defence of the dogmas of the Roman church[1], propounded seven criteria: First, preservation of the type, as a child develops into a man, and not into some animal; second, continuity of principle, by which

[1] I here repeat a few sentences from "Fundamental Ideas of the Roman Catholic Church", p. 233 ff.

is meant some determinative idea, such as the principle of private judgment in Protestantism; third, power of assimilation, or, as it might be stated, adaptability to and harmony with other truth; fourth, logical sequence; fifth, anticipation of the future, or the fact that hints of an idea to be fully developed later will be likely to be found at an early point; sixth, conservative action upon the past; seventh, chronic vigor, or, in simpler phrase, duration, the power of survival. With all the Cardinal's real abuse of these canons in his practical application of them to the various Roman dogmas, they are well conceived and afford a sufficient means of deciding on the "historical verdict" upon any point of doctrinal inquiry. But they may be more conveniently stated thus: first, the development must begin from a germ actually present in the recorded instruction of Jesus Christ and his apostles; second, it must proceed according to the laws of logical sequence; third, it must agree with other established Christian doctrines (assimilation); fourth, its developed form must agree with its original in substance and vital portion (conservation of the past), or, it must not contradict sound biblical exegesis.

First, the development must begin from a germ actually present in the recorded instructions of Jesus Christ and his apostles. This is more than a merely historical canon, like that of Ritschl already reviewed. It would have a sufficient justi-

fication in the fact that Christianity is an historical religion, if we were engaged in a simple historical investigation. But we are now seeking truth, and must admit, for argument's sake, at least, that there may have entered in elements of error into the edifice of truth, and that it is conceivable that this should have happened at the beginning. It is therefore necessary to observe that this canon for the determination of experience is substantiated by the results already derived from experience. The recognition of the divine origin of the Bible through the "testimony of the Spirit" affords a broad basis for the assumption that there will be nothing vital to Christianity omitted from its formative beginning. Were Christianity not a divine product in the believer's experience, and did he not see evidence of the divine presence in the Bible itself, had he no reason for going on thence to the larger recognition of the divine presence in Christian history whereby all its course must be conceived as proceeding under the guiding and over-ruling providence of God, then he might say that essential elements were lacking in its first period. Even then, as there was true revelation to Israel before the advent of Christ which was only partial, it might be conceived that new and vital elements were superadded to the New Testament doctrine, as this was superimposed on that of the Old Testament, if there were any books subsequent to the Bible which received the same "testimony". But the

Bible remains unique. Whatever other books later than it receive the parallel testimony, as Luther's Commentary on the Galatians certainly does, that it was produced in a mind moved by God, and so is in a measure a word of God, they are all manifestly dependent upon the Bible, as, in the example chosen, commentary is dependent upon text, or as a stream is dependent upon the fountain from which it proceeds. The Bible alone receives the full force of this testimony; and it alone is the word of God. As such it can give valid elements of Christian experience for our inquiry, and none not derivable from it in some sense, having not even a germ or suggestion to present in its behalf from the Bible, has any *prima facie* evidence in its favor. Rather, the *prima facie* case is against it, and it must bring from some other quarter more abundant and cogent reasons, if it can, before the cautious enquirer, bent on establishing every position firmly before advancing to others, could justify himself in reckoning it among the utterances of the universal Christian experience.

The second canon is that the development must proceed according to the laws of logical sequence. The more fundamental positions must be established before those which are built upon them, the trinity following the establishment of one supreme God, and Christology following the Trinity, not the reverse. The proofs for the accepted doctrines must possess a universal validity and

be as cogent to-day as at the beginning. Not that the full argument for every doctrinal position should have been advanced or even comprehended at the beginning, nor the ancient arguments be incapable of better statement now, or of receiving supplementation, or entirely new elements; but that soundness and convincing power must attend the process and abide with the result. The third canon demands that every new doctrine should agree with every old; or that the process should have that mark of truth which lies in inner consistency. It seeks in other words to emphasize the ultimate criterion by which we know all truth; for, ultimately, truth is harmony, consistency, a coherent system of ideas. The fourth canon is that the developed form of a doctrine must agree with its original form in substance and vital portion. The form may change, or a logical form may develop from the formless suggestions of earlier times, but in substance there can be no change. The doctrine of the Trinity, for example, could not be regarded as a legitimate development of Christian thinking if its vital substance were as absent from the New Testament as is the technical word "consubstantiality" by which its central definition is expressed. It did undoubtedly come to many a reflective Christian as something quite new, when the result of the Council of Nice was communicated to him, and required an elaborate explanation before he could understand it. It gained its con-

vincing proof when it was seen to explain such texts as "The Word was God;" and had it been against the general drift and total final impression of the New Testament, not all the councils which have been held since could have legitimated it in Christian thinking, any more than the Vatican council has been able to impose the doctrine of papal infallibility upon the Christian world.

With these fundamental canons one of Cardinal Newman's suggestions may be associated as helpful. That "chronic vigor", or power of survival, of which he speaks is certainly a most impressive indication that any church doctrine expresses the mind of the Spirit. If the Christian who has duly analyzed his own experiences needed any further proof of the prevenience of converting divine grace, the survival of the doctrine after eighteen centuries of discussion, formal and informal, would be its sufficient confirmation. Found implicitly contained in the whole piety of the ancient church by which they commended all their labor for souls to the blessing of God, it met its first shock of declared contradiction when Pelagius came to Rome and began to propound, as early as 405, his denial of the necessity of supernatural grace to any true service on the part of man to God, and of the transmission of a fault or corruption of nature. The contest, which Augustine took up, was severe, but in spite of the vagueness with which the Orientals expressed themselves, it terminated in the general acknowl-

edgment of prevenient grace. Then came the pelagianizing era of the Roman church, against which the Reformation was a protest, by which natural corruption and prevenient grace were placed again among the great essentials of the Christian scheme of the world and of salvation, although the pelagianizing tendency reappeared among the Protestants themselves. In our own country we had the same issue raised in the early years of the present century, in the Unitarian controversy of New England, which had its root not in the doctrine of the abstract simplicity of the divine nature, but in views of the dignity of man and of the nature of regeneration which were nothing but a revivified Pelagianism; and again, the aggressive, evangelizing church of Christ rejected the proposed modifications of doctrine and reaffirmed the depravity of man and the necessity of regenerating grace. Many other examples might be mentioned, with the same outcome. A doctrine thus possessed of the power of survival, thus reappearing at different epochs of the church, thus associating itself with forward movements of aggressive Christian power and allying itself with other elements of the gospel to produce strong Christian effects, has for it the repeated, the deliberate, the permanent voice of Christian conviction that it is, in fact, the truth of God. Few minds are so constituted as to deny the proving cogency of such a consideration.

Prof. F. H. Giddings has some suggestions as

to the place of survival in the sociological process which, with modifications, may illuminate the idea of survival as a criterion of theological truth. He says[1]:—

"The science of ethics examines critically the elements that enter into the conception of goodness, and the criteria that are applied to experiences, objects, actions, and relations, in order that it may arrive at a true notion of the ideal good. Sociology must examine them historically and inductively,—in their evolutionary aspect,—as a part of its study of social choice.

"Elements and criteria of the ideal good are of two widely contrasted kinds. Some are subjective; they are states of mind or qualities of conduct or character that are regarded as inherently excellent. Others are objective; they are relations of adaptation to an external world. Pleasure, for example, is a subjective element of the ideal good; survival is an objective criterion. . . .

"The present social arrangements are survivals. Thousands of different arrangements have disappeared because their usefulness to men was transient or slight. They did not profit the tribes or peoples that used then sufficiently to save either peoples or institutions from extinction. The social arrangements that live as a part of the life of virile communities are arrangements that make communities virile. Directly or indirectly they help to make a better social man, keener in mind

[1] "Principles of Sociology," pp. 403 ff.

and more adept in co-operation. But among all possible social choices in law and institution making, which will bring these results? What choices, merely as choices, will natural selection prefer?

"The answer that sociology gives is very certain. The law is unmistakable. Those subjective values will survive which are component parts in a total or whole of subjective values that is becoming ever more complex through the inclusion of new interests, and at the same time more thoroughly harmonious and coherent."

In analogy with this it may be said that under the providence of God the doctrines of the evangelical system are survivals; that they have survived in the estimation and belief of the church because they have been found by successive generations of Christians to contribute to the most vigorous Christian life; and that they are component parts in a whole that is becoming ever more complex through the inclusion of new doctrines, and at the same time more thoroughly harmonious and coherent. Their mere survival is a proof of their truth, as social survival is a proof of social normality; and they tend ever to form a definite and articulated system.

One cannot be surprised that the thought of a magnificent system of truth developing through the ages should have made a deep impression upon the mind of one who, like Cardinal Newman, was keenly susceptible to impressions of

beauty and grandeur, even if too imaginative and idealizing in his tendencies to form accurate and reliable judgments upon delicate and profound questions of doctrine. As the cathedral grows through the centuries, built by successive generations of workmen from plans prepared by an unknown architect, each group of workmen adding something to the rising walls, or erecting some new row of columns, or elaborating the carving of capitals and stalls and screens, or stretching up buttresses and arches towards the stone firmament above, or building lantern and tower and spire piercing heaven with its tracery of petrified lace; so has the edifice of Christian doctrine grown. It has fetched its materials from distant quarries of the mind where obscure delvers have prepared materials they knew not for what; it has stirred the profound interest and secured the devoted labors of the princes of human thought; men have gladly perished that they might place in its walls what they deemed some specially rare and beautiful stones of truth or add to its adornment some blazing window of illuminating argument; the plan has been forgotten, and barbarous hands have made unhallowed additions, which better instructed laborers have torn away and replaced with the original designs of the architect; silence and forgetfulness have supervened for centuries of ignorance and decay; but, in it all, under an unseen guidance, after the plans of the Master Builder, it has been rising, expanding,

beautifying, ennobling, till at last it stands beside the ancient, historic river of God's ever-flowing grace, a temple fit for the habitation of God through his Spirit. It is not strange that men worshiping in it and forming sacred associations with every feature of it, finding this chapel the fit place for consolation in some great affliction, that tower the eminence from which some view of distant peaks and mountain ranges of divine providence can be gained, hearing nothing but God's praises in its choir, and truth proclaimed from its pulpits, should ascribe to it something of the perfection of God himself. It has that perfection; and yet it is built, like the cathedral, of the stone, wood, and iron of human conceptions and human limitations. The divine is in it; but it is not itself divine.

Against this view, however, the school of Ritschl has made strenuous objection. Theologians who hold it have been called "romancers" by Harnack, by which he apparently meant to imply that they were indebted to their imaginations for their theories if not for their facts. With whatever modifications here and there, the general impression given by Ritschl and his colleagues in the movement he initiated as to the early history of the church, doctrinal or practical, is that it was a period of gross corruption, that its good was almost hidden beneath its evil, and that the church lost its deposit of truth in conflict

with the errors of the time, which speedily conquered it, "Hellenized" it, and converted it into that great system of mediæval error from which Luther scarcely rescued it. Thus these theologians are by no means indifferent to church history as a source of instruction as to Christian doctrine. Ritschl gained his earliest and some of his most abundant laurels in this field. Harnack stands confessedly at the apex of German historical scholarship to-day. Nothing has ever been written in the department of doctrinal history more learned, original, thorough, and comprehensive, than Harnack's "*Dogmengeschichte*". But after all, they exhibit little docility in their use of history. Kaftan, adopting the words of Strauss, says: "The subjective criticism of the individual is like the aqueduct that any boy can stop for a time, but the criticism which gradually gathers in the course of centuries is a roaring torrent against which no gates or dams avail anything." And compressing into a single sentence the criticism of the school upon the view of history which I have presented above, Kaftan first defines the view thus: "That the dogma of the church has been formed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as the necessary, and in the main the permanent and standard expression of Christian truth;" and then adds: "That is Roman Catholicism."[1] As the latest criticism of our position, and by the most influential school of dis-

[1] Compare the "*Wahrheit*", pp. 234 ff.

tinctively modern thought, the objection demands our consideration. It may demand this the more because we have given essential approval to the historical canons of a Roman Catholic, Cardinal Newman.

Yet it may be well to lay upon ourselves injunction against haste in interpreting or answering Kaftan, for he may not have meant all that he at first seems to mean. Selecting our steps, therefore, carefully, we note that his opposition to the view begins with his conception of the influence of Greek thought in emphasizing the intellectual, to the exclusion of the practical element of theology. The theological center of gravity, according to the Greeks, was in the intellectual form of truth, while pure Christianity placed it in the obedience of the heart. We have already discussed this point of objection at length, and while agreeing with Kaftan in the relative importance of the two elements, we cannot follow him in his complete rejection of knowledge as a legitimate object of theological search.

But, this point aside, Kaftan continues that the church dogma, as every one now confesses, cannot be found in the Scriptures in the form in which it is expressed in the creeds. It can be regarded at best only as the necessary continuation of the initial elements found in the Scriptures. The objection to that would be that the Bible thereby becomes merely the first link in the chain of development, no longer being the source and

standard of theology. But not so much as this, he says, can be granted to the historians. The tendency of the thought in the Bible is entirely different from that of the church dogma. The contents are also different; and to bring dogma and Bible into harmony it is necessary to interpret Bible by the dogma, having first ascribed to the latter a supernatural character and origin,— and that is Catholicism.

Some degree of justification to this objection we are prepared at once to admit. It is right to bring every dogma as rigidly to the test of the Bible as if there were no historical development; for this is our first canon, that the doctrine must originate in a New Testament germ, and our fourth, that it must agree with the New Testament origin. It is true also that there is a point in the development of dogma where Romanizing influences begin, and that the system of the present church of Rome can only be justified by assuming that it was complete substantially in its present form at the beginning, and interpreting that beginning in the light of the end.[1] But whether that is true of the whole system of dogma, including those positions which the Protestant churches have taken up into their system, is a possible question, to which, for our part, we answer, No! Of this more later.

[1] For fuller illustrations of this point, I may refer to the "Fundamental Ideas of the R. C. Church", pp. 55, 308, 329, 352.

We shall do better if we follow from this point Kaftan's own personal view. Two things, he says,[1] are to be kept in mind in any historical investigation, first, the leading thought, the principle of the development, second, the historical facts. "In general terms, this leading thought can be nothing but belief in the government of the divine Spirit in the church, in the development of Christendom. No other view would do justice to the general relations of the Christian faith and the Christian theology. . . . . But our view of this development must be further determined by the specifically Christian faith in revelation; and, as revelation came into being in a certain way, so must the further divine guidance of history be understood in the same way." And particularly, "the divine revelation [through history] in the world can only be made in constant struggle with human weakness and perversion; there must come real catastrophes; it cannot be made in the form of a regular development, in a straight line, but only as a movement advancing by successive steps". There is the Israelitish Exile, the tragedy of Calvary, etc. Hence, while we believe firmly in the divine guidance in all the development of the church, "we cannot expect that there will be continuously pure, unmingled results in any department, not even in that of doctrine, designed to be esteemed permanently as possessing divine authority". History will be a

[1] "*Wahrheit*", p. 249 ff.

" continuation of the divine revelation " [this in the sense of a continued contact between God and his people through the Holy Spirit] ; but " not in the sense that the perfect revelation [in Christ] will ever be surpassed, or ever cease to be the pure norm of everything later".

With this " leading thought " most of us, I suppose, certainly I myself, for one, can be perfectly content. It is precisely what we ourselves mean when we affirm that there is normal and abnormal development in history and that all is to be subjected to criticism according to certain canons. Kaftan here, as in many places, marks the gain which has been made by the Ritschlian school over the extremes exhibited by Ritschl himself and by Harnack. The best refutation of original Ritschlianism is this modified, present-day Ritschlianism.

When he comes to the second thing to which particular attention was to be paid, the historical facts, it is evident that if Kaftan accepted the church dogma of the " two natures in the one person of Christ ", for example, as biblical and correct, he would feel differently at that point in respect to the value of the historical development. We may pass this particular for the present, since we shall be brought back to it in the progress of our study when we come to the teachings of experience as to the person of Christ. The main, and at all events the most striking, " fact " to which he calls attention is the fact of German

rationalism in the last century, which he declares followed the method of Protestant dogmatics, and really destroyed the system, not however its Christian but its Catholic elements, for it was still Catholic in its method. Here we meet again the doctrine of "knowledge", of which enough has been said above.

Our contention with Kaftan is therefore not over his principles of interpreting history but over the details of judgment as to definite points. But he may well teach us to be careful and biblical in such criticism, and to hold ourselves ever ready to reject or amend whatever we do not find "in accord with the beginning of Christian history, with the New Testament". Under his forms of statement the Ritschlian criticism becomes a confirmation of our position. Christian history can teach us much. It often presents the results of the most careful and prolonged study of the truth. It has repeatedly passed such a judgment upon truths that they may be said to have in their favor the combined verdict of Christians, the voice of general Christian experience. When this is so, the truths in question are not demonstrated thereby, or proved independently of questions of exegesis, or rendered infallibly certain; but, only, they have gained one argument, and that an important one, in their favor. The Christian cathedral of doctrine is a temple of God and a structure of his own building, though by means of human hands and with many a resulting im-

perfection. Its great elements are not errors, nor as Kaftan implies, too exclusively formed under the influence of an abnormal thirst for an unobtainable and undesirable "knowledge", but were formed by the heart as well as the head of the church, and are found sustained by the voice of a universal Christian experience, ancient, it is true, but also modern and, we believe, destined to endure forever.

LECTURE IV

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

In the analysis of Christian experience we have hitherto moved somewhat in the realm of abstractions. For the sake of sharpness of analysis and independence of treatment we have defined the ultimate Christian fact of experience, the new birth, as the supreme choice of duty. It is thus an act of allegiance to the abstract right. From the point of theory it may be thus defined; but practically it seldom, and among such a group of Christians as this is, perhaps never, assumes so abstract a form. It is a most concrete act for the generality of Christians. It is faith, rather than mere naked choice, faith in a person, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the tender of allegiance to him as personal King, Example, and Guide, yes, as infinite Benefactor to the soul. Our abstract discussion has had the advantage of advancing from the simplest facts of our experience to sound and unquestionable positions which supply us a firm basis for our subsequent inquiries; but we should fail to reap fully the advantage thus gained, did

we not now leave the abstract, and begin the study of the concrete, the real forms of Christian experience. And as that ultimate act of choice is in its concrete form the definite choice of Jesus Christ as King, we must begin with the inquiry what experience has to teach us as to Christ.

The Apostle Paul determined not to know "anything" among the Corinthians "save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Christian preaching has been since that time the preaching of the Redeemer. Not only we, who sit here to-day, in this far-away place and time, but the listening crowds at Pentecost, in Lystra and Derbe, at Philippi, Corinth, Rome, by the Rhone, in the forests of Germany, and over the plains of Britain, all first heard of God as he was revealed in Christ, of the divine Father who was such a Father as was manifested in all the doctrine and work of the Prophet of Galilee and the Victim of Calvary. Christian experience of God is historically involved in experience of Christ.

How comprehensively this is true is to be seen first, by a careful re-examination of the steps already trodden in our analysis.

When those motives first began to press upon us which led to the surrender of ourselves to duty, they were motives which proceeded directly and recognizably from Christ. In choosing duty, we chose him; and the motives proceeding from the idea of duty were motives originating in him. These motives were, first, the idea of duty itself;

but the voice which quickened conscience into the emphatic assertion of obligation was that insistent preaching of obligation which began with Jesus' recognition of obligation for himself, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve". He ever enforced duty by his preaching, from the Sermon on the Mount, "Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you", to his summary of all duty, quoted from the ancient law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself". No voice presents duty in more pungent phrase or exclusive aspect than his, as when he said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. . . . He that doth not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me". Not life itself is to be preferred to the new allegiance, for "he that findeth his life"—by any base denial—"shall lose it". But the lesson was taught more powerfully by his example than by his words. His personal attitude of entire submission at every point of his career to the will of the Father involved the sacrifice of Calvary, "for which cause he came into the world". The complete vindication of duty's demands when at their hardest in the glorious outcome of his triumph by way of the cross, so that for every Christian the *via crucis* has become the *via lucis,* this illumination of duty shining into the darkness of the soul's struggles and confusion, is that which disclosed hidden and forgotten duty and

awakened the response of every faculty to its demands.

But duty as presented by Jesus Christ was neither abstract duty nor mere duty. Fundamental duty is to love God; and God is " our Father ". The question of duty begins to receive definite contents of worship, submission, glad service; and with the perception of what God is, as Jesus preaches him, the emotions are kindled as well as the mind informed. He is the Creator and bountiful Benefactor from whom we have received all that we have and all that we are. But he is our Father; and by this phrase, the Redeemer, anticipating his own work of propitiation, and putting himself in thought already within that kingdom of heaven which he came to found, and which without his final sacrifice could never have entered in, declared God to be already reconciled and ready to receive the penitent sinner into the infinite heart of his love. The prophetic words of the ancient seer receive their full meaning in the preaching of Jesus, " All day have I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people ". And, as no man at all stirred with a sense of sin and perception of his obligation to God, can listen to the parable of the Prodigal Son without the deepest emotions as he hears the father interrupt the son in the midst of his confession and thrust back unuttered the petition just trembling on the poor penitent's lips, " Make me as one of thy hired servants ", with the glad cry,

" Bring forth the best robe and put it on him ", so no awakened soul can listen to what Jesus here and everywhere teaches about God, without the most tender and powerful sense of profound gratitude, drawing him towards the injured Father who offers full forgiveness out of his boundless and eternal goodness. But not even this exhausts the teaching of Christ as to the Father. It is the " way of the cross " which is the way of light ". The love of Christ himself is self-sacrificing, and it needs no long argument to point the lesson to any man that " greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends ". But in this Christ shows us the Father. If Christ so loved the world as to die for it, God is said by him to have " so loved the world as to send his only Son "; and in that text the father heart in humanity has recognized the divine sacrifice in the cross. Nothing has been left unpainted in the picture of the divine love which could attract the enthusiasm and stir the gratitude of the soul or lift it, by the elevating force of its highest ideals, towards complete self-surrendering and self-submitting worship.

But the catalogue of motives eliciting the fundamental act of the soul is not yet completed. Jesus holds up God before the soul and most powerfully attracts it to him. He also holds up sin before it, and thus furnishes another group of powerful motives, repelling the soul from evil and so impelling it towards good. How hateful

some ebullition of bad temper has appeared to any of us who may have encountered the wondering and pained gaze of some man whom we knew to live in the serene light of a great and deep love for men! And how have all of us "gone out and wept bitterly" when in the midst of our denials we have seen the Master "looking" upon us! The Pharisee, as he stands thanking God that he is not as other men are; the Jews, as they thrust light from them and surround the gentle teacher with the atmosphere of calumny and hatred; Judas, as he adds envy to avarice, and treachery to envy, and suicide to treachery; the shallow fields which send up thorns to choke the good seed; the niggardly charity of a Dives who has an heir of heaven languishing unrecognized at his door; the young man who goes away sorrowing; the unfaithful servants; the cruel husbandmen who would not render the fruits of the vineyard; all these show under varied lights the meaning and deep unworthiness of what men call peccadillos, but the voice of Jesus sets forth as sin. And deeper shadows fall upon it when its end is seen, when the "worm that dieth not", and the "fire that is not quenched", when the judgment seat with its throng of flippant sinners and their self-assertive defence of sin, and its "everlasting" punishment of those on the left hand, when "eternal death", shroud it in the darkness of hopeless and remediless ruin.

In a sense, Christ is the source of those further

motives to conversion which at first seem to come exclusively from our fellows. They have their origin not in "the world", but in the world as it is already in a degree the sphere of the kingdom of heaven. Historically they are to be traced to the preaching performed by our Saviour, since they are only possible in that community which has proceeded from his instructions. But it is not necessary to expand this thought. Enough has now been said to bring before us the fact that that whole assemblage of motives which led the Christian to the supreme choice of duty, and which, on account of their nature and the character of their operation upon him, he is compelled to ascribe logically to the Supreme Personality, is historically to be ascribed to Jesus Christ. He begins in the light of this reflection to see that Christ represents God to him at this most vital point of his experience. And this perception suggests other thoughts.

It is the marked peculiarity of Jesus Christ among the religious leaders of the world, true and false, to demand belief in himself. The culmination of sin is "to believe not on him". That faith which we are studying, and which we are bringing from the abstract sphere into the concrete, is pre-eminently faith in Jesus as a Saviour. Not his doctrines, but his person is here meant. We are to "commit ourselves to him", to take his promise of eternal life to those who believe in him as the pledge of our salvation, to make

him our King, to believe in the forgiveness of our sins, to center our service about him as its object. This is the peculiar type of piety which he demands and which the church has always cherished from the beginning. In it alone is to be found the full meaning of the appellation bestowed upon the church at Antioch, of Christians. When, now, the Christian actually begins the new life, it is under this form. He believes in Christ, performing in this manner his great surrender to duty. I do not now say that he must, for I am not now in the realm of theological abstractions: I simply call attention to the fact that in the great mass of people who are called Christians and who constitute what is called the church of Christ, in all lands and in all ages, the distinctive and ultimate Christian act has taken place in this form. The Christian submits himself to God in Christ, and then something wonderful occurs. His trust is not met by silence, vacancy, and irresponsiveness, plunging him into the despair of those who worshiped the dumb idols of heathenism; but to his humble submission a truly divine answer is given. From Christ he actually receives those gifts which he refers and must refer to God, the forgiveness of his sins and the sanctification of his soul. He experiences upon this surrender as a condition, that internal harmony of soul, which by the process of thought already outlined in the second lecture, he recognizes as the forgiveness of God.

Further, we obtain, as already noted, our clearest and loftiest views of God from the revelation made of him by Christ. God's highest attributes are his spiritual attributes, and they all culminate in his love. As we receive the revelation, we find that to devout contemplation those divine attributes appear exemplified in the revealer, Jesus, himself. If God is love, so is Christ; if God comes in condescending love to seek and save a race of sinners, Christ does precisely this: If God is long-suffering, if he hates iniquity and avenges the oppressed, so does Christ; if he is our Judge, so is Christ; if God is a tender friend, the most loving accents which ever fell from human lips were spoken by him who washed the feet of the disciples and called them his friends; if God is perfect holiness, so that the highest ideal of the mind only faintly reflects his excellence, so is Christ, the perfections of whose character have remained the unsurpassed ideal of humanity. Whatever view we form of God in the sphere of moral attributes, Christ is the living exemplification of it, so that humanity has found what Christ himself said to be the unexhausted and inexhaustible fact of the Christian centuries, that "he who hath seen him, hath seen the Father".

Thus Christ is for the Christian, that is, in his experience, God. From Christ there come to him what he recognizes as the influences of God, the controlling influences which have led him to

the loftiest act which any mortal can perform. And when he looks for the source of the greatest gifts which he has received, of the greatest any created spirit can receive, and which, again, he ascribes to God, he beholds that source in Christ. All that he knows of God he knows through the ministering of Christ. Christ identifies himself to the Christian with God by being and doing what God is and does.

I state this positively as Christian experience. Every one of you must test it by your own experience. If you have come to God by some other path; if you find Christ unable to confer salvation upon you; if you have an ideal of excellence higher than that which he taught and was; then the proof avails nothing for you. But even then you will find instruction in the fact that universal Christian experience speaks for the deity of Christ. You may both test and enrich your own experience by tracing this larger experience.

For the universal Christian experience we turn, first, to the New Testament. Two of its writers represent in an especial degree the theology of experience, John and Paul, and to them we shall direct our chief attention, while not neglecting others. John begins his first epistle, which must be our principal authority for his experience, since it is not occupied, as is the gospel, in recording events and reporting the teachings of the Master, but with the independent expression of his own thoughts,—he begins this epistle

by emphasizing the fact of his own personal knowledge of Christ. "That which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life," it is his object to declare. All that he says is thus founded on personal experience. As we read the pages of the epistle one after another, we cannot fail to find the constant evidence of experiential knowledge. All the forms in which Christ appears before the converting sinner and exerts divine influence upon him, are indicated here. It was from Christ that the disciple heard that God was "light", convincing of sin by the contrast of men's lives with him in whom was "no darkness at all". The ideal of perfect purity was conveyed to him by Christ;[1] and the revelation of the love of God, which was a constant wonder to the apostle,[2] was made in the hour when Jesus "laid down his life for us", for then God "manifested" his love, and indeed declared it to be his nature,—"for God is love", —a love which anticipated our love, for we, immersed in sins, "did not love God, but he loved us and sent his Son to be the propriation for our sins". When Jesus made those astonishing exclusive claims for himself which are reported by all the evangelists,[3] by which he identified the

[1] 1 Jn. iii. 3, "ἐκεῖνος."

[2] 1 Jn. iii. 1, "ποταπήν."

[3] Cf. with Jn. iii. 18 and xvi. 9, Matt. x. 32, 33, 37-39. Mk. xv. 24-38.

honor of God with his own honor, John fully reproduced them in the words, "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father"; and this, no doubt, because of his experience of the divine power of salvation proceeding from Jesus, whom he "bore witness" the Father had sent "to be the Saviour of the world", having learnt that he possessed the secret of victory over the world (i. 5).

More marked than any other feature of this epistle, as it seems to me, is its exuberant expression of confidence by the word "know", the true word for expressing experiential certainty. It has a lower meaning in various passages, as when it signifies knowledge obtained by inference from facts, such as the knowledge of our spiritual state from the concrete features of our spiritual lives (ii. 3, 6. iii. 14. v. 2. cf. ii. 18), or a firm conviction (iii. 19. v. 13, 15), or even knowledge of a mere historical fact (v. 20); but its predominant meaning is another. It signifies the certainty of personal acquaintance with Christ (ii. 13, v. 20) and with God (ii. 13, iv. 6, 7); of moral intuition by which great principles of the spiritual life, such as this, "that every one that doeth righteousness is begotten of him" (ii. 29, cf. iv. 16, iii. 2, 6, 15, v. 18), are directly perceived; of the witness of the Spirit which is the work of the Spirit in the soul (iii. 24, iv. 13); culminating in the certainty of salvation in the present possession of communion with God (v.

19). With this knowledge he "knows" Jesus Christ (i. 1-4, cf. Phil. iii. 10), and recognizes in him "the true God" (v. 20).

We mark here the same path of experiential advance towards the doctrine of the divinity of Christ which we have already traced in common Christian experience. It is not necessary to suppose that John traversed this path consciously. He might have done so. But more probably, it was under the growing evidence of the marvellous works of Christ (the Gospel, x. 25); of his positive teaching in regard to himself, that he came down from heaven (iii. 13), was himself eternal (viii. 58), the light of men (viii. 12), the way, the truth, and the life (xiv. 6); of his constant reference of the salvation of men to himself (vi. 35); of his own association of himself with God in honor (v. 23, cf. Phil ii. 9, 10, 11), and his teaching that he was the power of resurrection (vi. 40, xi. 25) and the final Judge (v. 22); that John came to recognize and believe his true deity as the eternal Word (i. 1), who was God, by whom all things were made, and who, come in the flesh, was full of grace and truth as the only begotten of the Father (i. 14). It was with this apostle as with most of us,—experience and instruction went hand in hand. Instruction called forth experience; but experience following, interpreted, brought home the convincing argument, added the final and essential inner confirmation. Then the apostle "knew",

and his testimony was of one who had handled the Word of Life! He "beheld the glory", and the argument was swift: this was the "only begotten of the Father".

The Apostle Paul began his Christian life in quite another way. He had no personal acquaintance with Jesus upon earth, and in his mind there were no results of direct communications of truth from a living and visible human teacher. Up to the moment of the vision upon the way to Damascus, Paul was in sharpest conflict with the followers of Jesus and in no respect inclined to grant to him a higher title than false prophet or to ascribe to him any powers but those which belong to a dead man. By this most sudden and overwhelming event he was led utterly to change his mind. He viewed Christ now as Messiah and Lord. He recognized Christ's immediate agency in this change and in all that came from it. He never thereafter could look upon Christ in any aspect which should obscure that in which he appeared as an exalted king, exercising an extended sovereignty over men and things for the benefit of his kingdom upon earth.[1] The glorious, living and reigning Christ eclipsed in his

[1] Martineau (Seat of Authority in Religion, p. 483) says: "What is called the 'mystic' language of the Apostle, of 'living in Christ' and 'Christ living in him', of 'Christ being formed in his disciples', is hardly even figurative to him, but expresses a fact of experience as understood by himself."

eyes and almost banished from his thought[1] the prophet of Galilee. And so Paul becomes the biblical example of that sort of conversion which, in these lectures we have been considering as typical amid all the examples of other, less plain but essentially identical, conversion. The critics will deny the objective character of the Damascus vision, ascribing it to the objectifying tendency of powerful impressions in an abnormally excitable mind. But, waiving the whole controverted question, Paul was a convert in mature years, under powerful motives, to the Christian cause; and as such he stands forth as a permanent example of a change which has been occurring ever since.

We should therefore expect, if Christianity has "preserved its type", and if modern Christian experience is truly normal in its characteristic manifestations, that Paul would be found to furnish examples of the same experiences and lines of reflection and to arrive at the same conclusions reached by Christians to-day. Essentially this is so. We trace in the personal touches found in his exceptionally personal epistles the great lines of thought we have just seen in John and had previously found in ourselves. The seventh and eighth of Romans, in particular, are so vivid in

[1] But not quite, see Ro. ix. 5, 1, 3. 1 Cor. xi. 23. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Cor. xv. 21. Ro. v. 15, cf. Acts xvii. 31. Ro. viii. 3. 2 Cor. xiii. 4, and Heb. ii. 10, 17, 18 and like.

their description of the progress of an awakened soul through the struggle with the "law of sin in the members" out into the liberty of the sons of God through the deliverance wrought in Christ that we cannot doubt it is a picture drawn by the artist of himself. That process of conviction is introduced by "the law", but elsewhere he refers the beginning of the Christian life to the election of God "in Christ", so that to his enlightened vision Christ was the source of the conviction, as manifestly of the culminating deliverance, wrought by personal revelation of himself. This may be less evident to some of you than it appears to me; but how clear is the experience Paul gained of divine power proceeding from Christ and working liberation from the "law of death"! "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" he cries, only to find the swift answer, no doubt as it was brought into the physical darkness of blindness which had supervened upon the spiritual darkness of despair, "I thank God, [I am delivered] through Jesus Christ, our Lord". He delineated the steps of the deliverance, so that there can be no doubt left that he had received from Christ an impartation of divine gifts. The "weakness" of the law is replaced by a "fulfilling of the ordinance",—the definite, concrete, homely details commanded,—"of the law". The "mind of the flesh" is succeeded by the "mind of the spirit", and this is found to be "life and peace"—just

that harmony which the Christian finds in his soul, originating in his conversion. Men come to be "in the spirit", and this is "the Spirit of Christ", which is a spirit of life, quickening even the "mortal body". For "bondage" comes "adoption", and for "enmity", "heirship". And all this springs from "the love of Christ" towards us, from which "neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us". It is a history of salvation in which Christ becomes experientially "the power of God and the wisdom of God".

The same experience underlies Paul's doctrine of justification. On its objective side it cannot, of course, be a matter of experience. Paul presents it almost like a drama (Ro. iii. 19-26), viewing all men as brought guilty before the bar of God, able to plead nothing in their defence; God setting forth his Son, in his blood, as a propitiation, to show his righteousness; and then the gift of God, the righteousness provided by him bestowed upon believers and their acquittal freely by God's grace. But it is also a subjective process, an experience of the soul, and this also Paul sketches (Ro. v. 1-11). The objective act of God performed, "peace" springs up in the soul, from which develops other Christian blessings, hope of glory ascending out of tribulations upon the golden ladder of patience and probation, and

incapable of putting us to shame because it is a work of the love of God conferred upon us and made operative in us by the Holy Ghost,—and joy in God. The work of God is thus experienced by the apostle, and it is inextricably involved in and united with the work of Christ, so that their work is the same work and God appears to the apostle "through" Christ. And, as with John, it is through Christ that we come really to know God, in learning through his death what, in its depth of meaning, the love of God is. Such is Paul's experience of the divine power proceeding from Christ, when his own soul believed on him; and he expects to find it repeated in every other believer's soul. He speaks in the passage just in review always in the plural: "we" have peace, joy, hope, and reconciliation. Nor is all this, in his view, a mere subjective notion, a conception of amiable origin and pleasant appearance, but of no value in the exigencies of life: it is a subjective fact, an experience, something knowable and known, and hence objectively valuable. He therefore proceeds upon one very critical occasion to make it the basis of an argument, and to rest upon it nothing less than the great contention of his life and his whole apostolic mission. When the emissaries of the Jews had "bewitched" the Galatian Christians, he appealed to them thus: "This only would I learn from you, Received ye [as an actual fact, in your remembered experience] the Spirit [so

as to come into the conscious freedom of the Christian man] by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" And, doubting nothing what their answer must be, he proceeds "Are ye so foolish? Having begun [as ye know ye did] in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?"

Thus Paul's argument for the true deity of Jesus Christ was not one derived alone from the manifestation of his heavenly glory made in the way to Damascus, but from that and other revelations of his divine nature, interpreted and reenforced by experiences of his present divine operation. No Apostle, therefore, more emphasizes the present reign of Christ upon the throne of the universe than he. He goes back to the creation of the world and ascribes this to Christ, views its whole progress as taking place under his sustaining and directing power, and makes its goal the glory of Christ.[1] Out of this original divine form he came when he emptied himself and took the form of a servant that he might endure the death of the cross; and from that depth of humiliation he has been exalted and has received the ineffable name and come to be far above all rule and authority and power, all

[1] Col. i. 15 ff. Note that, like John, he makes Christ the medium rather than the ultimate original of creation, using the same preposition as he, διά, (Col. i. 16 cf. Jn. i. 3). The identity of the Christology of these two apostles will appear more evident the more careful the study given to them.

things being in subjection under his feet, where he shall reign in divine glory till redemption is accomplished and the mediatorial kingdom shall come to an end.[1]

Could we pause long enough, sufficient proof might be gained, even from the brief suggestions of the New Testament, that the experience of the rest of the apostolic group was the same. Nathaniel, when he first met Jesus, recognized in him the "King of Israel" (Jn. i. 49); hesitating but devoted Thomas hailed him as "Lord and God" (Jn. xx. 28); Peter preached his exaltation and lordship[2]; ascribed to him the guidance of the ancient prophecy (1 Peter i. 11), and made him the living and present agent of divine effects (Acts ii. 33); Stephen saw him rising from his throne to receive the martyr's soul (Acts vii. 56); Paul's pupil who wrote the Hebrews, made him creator, preserver, exalted king (i. 1-4), eternal spirit (ix. 14), author of salvation (ii. 10); and James calls him "Lord of glory" (ii. 1). Our first appeal to the general experience of the church, made to its first repository in the original documents of our religion, which contain the record of what was felt and learned by those who were in immediate connection with Jesus Christ and wrought in the formative period of the newly established church, has, therefore, resulted in the

[1] Phil. ii. 5-11, compared with Eph. i. 20-23, 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

[2] Acts ii. 33, 36. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Cf. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

confirmation of our own experience. It is the testimony of the apostolic era, as of our own, that Christ is God.

This is our appeal to the New Testament record of Christian experience. We are now to make a second appeal, viz., to the experience of the church since the apostolic days, to the final verdict of Christian doctrinal history. We shall incidentally get another and in some respects more irrefutable answer to the objection considered at an earlier point, since it will appear that Christian experience is not founded upon the Bible in the sense that it is the blind acceptance of something given from without by a merely external authority, but that it has ever been an assimilating process, reflecting upon communicated truth, viewing it on many sides, and receiving it after abundant independent tests and after the confirmation of proved adaptation to the spiritual life which it was expected to nourish. It is like human testimony to the goodness of a food, eaten because offered by friendly hands, but pronounced good because found to assimilate with the body easily and to sustain health and strength.

No one familiar with the forms of New Testament piety can open the earliest post-canonical writings without immediately perceiving the close relation of the one to the other. It is not a relation of identity, for the plane on which the apostolic fathers stand is lower than that of the apostles; but a relation of derivation of material as

yet not fully comprehended, and in one sense, the purely intellectual and abstract sense, not comprehended at all. Still, as the purpose of the apostolical writings was practical and the audience to which they were addressed was of the common, uneducated mass of humanity, the difference of form is not so great as that of depth of thought, range of theme, and breadth of horizon. In respect to the person of the Redeemer, there are sufficient hints in the earliest of these postapostolic writers to show complete agreement with the New Testament in regarding him as God; and yet the chief argument for this statement is not what is expressly said, but what is implied in the general attitude and form of piety towards him. In the eucharistic liturgy of the "Teaching" we read "Hosanna to the God of David"; Ignatius styles him repeatedly God[1] —"begotten and unbegotten, God come in the flesh"[2]—speaking once of "the blood of God" (Eph. i.) in evident allusion to Acts xx. 28; the Epistle to Diognetus takes up the Pauline words and calls him the "architect and world-builder by whom [God] created the heavens", and names him "God" (chap. vii); Hermas speaks of him as "the holy pre-existent Spirit, that created every creature"[3]; which style of expression is

[1] Ephesians xviii., Romans, introduc., iii.; Smyrneans, x.

[2] Eph. vii; cf. xix.

[3] Shepherd, Similitude, V., vi.

followed by Justin, who calls him "God" (Dial. 56), and also by all the later great writers, as it is unnecessary to encumber the argument by proving. Many of the early church derived this view from the New Testament circle and consciously rested, no doubt, upon that authority directly and exclusively, though not without a sense of experiential confirmation of all the God-like greatness that was ascribed to the Redeemer. It is certainly identical in its principal features with the New Testament view.[1] But occasionally we find evidence of the influence of experience in the formation of opinion, and sometimes that the early church followed more or less clearly that precise line of thought, beginning with the experience of salvation, which we have ourselves traced to-day. For example, at the beginning of the so-called Second Epistle of Clement, a homily dated by Harnack somewhere in the interval between 130 and 160 A. D., we find this remarkable passage:—

"Brethren, it is fitting that you should think of Jesus Christ as of God,—as the judge of the living and the dead. And it does not become us to think lightly of our salvation [as we should if we failed to perceive from it that he is God]". And now the argument takes a homiletic direc-

[1] Harnack strongly opposes this view. I have done what I can to answer him, I hope with success, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for April, 1892, to which I take the liberty to refer for a fuller discussion.

tion, to return shortly to its abandoned course— " for, if we think little of him, we shall also hope to obtain but little. . . . . For, indeed, how great are the benefits which we owe to him! He has graciously given us light; as a father [still spoken of Christ] he has called us sons; he has saved us when we were ready to perish. . . . . We were deficient in understanding, worshiping stones and wood and gold and silver and brass, the works of men's hands; and our whole life was nothing else than death. Involved in blindness and with such darkness before our eyes, we have received sight and through his will have laid aside that cloud by which we were enveloped. For he had compassion upon us and mercifully saved us, observing the many errors in which we were entangled, as well as the destruction to which we were exposed, and that we had no hope of salvation except it came to us from him. For he called us when we were not, and willed that out of nothing we should attain a real existence. . . . . Thus also did Christ desire to save the things which were perishing, and has saved many by coming and calling us when hastening to destruction. Since, then, he has displayed so great mercy towards us, and especially in this respect, that we who are living should not offer sacrifices to gods which are dead or pay them worship, but should attain through him to the knowledge of the true Father, whereby shall we show that we do indeed know him but by not denying him

through whom this knowledge has been obtained [that is, by 'thinking of him as of God']? . . . Let us then not only call him Lord. . . [but] let us confess him by our works."[1]

In this remarkable passage, remarkable for the clearness of its argument as well as the depth and comprehensiveness of its view of the work of Christ in the experience of the Christian, we have the fuller expression of what recurs elsewhere in less perfect form. In the Epistle to Diognetus it is, however, scarcely less perfect. The writer argues the vanity of idols from their complete inability to help in any way. "Are they not destitute of feeling? Are they not incapable of motion?" His argument for the divinity of Christ, which he presents in the fullest expression yet found in this literature, is substantially that of the homily's and the converse of the refutation of idols, though put in the form, Since he was God he did these God-like things. He writes accordingly, "As a king sends his son who is also a king, so sent he him; as God he sent him, as to men he sent him; as a Saviour he sent him, and as seeking to persuade, not to compel us; for violence has no place in the character of God. As calling he sent him, not as vengefully pursuing us; as loving us he sent him, not as judging us. For he will yet send him to judge us, and

[1] After the translation of the Christian Literature Company's Edition of the "Ante-Nicene Fathers," vol. IX., p. 251 f.

who shall endure his appearing? Do you not see them [Christians] exposed to wild beasts, that they may be persuaded to deny the Lord, and yet not overcome? Do you not see that the more of them are punished, the greater becomes the number of the rest? This does not seem to be the work of a man: this is the power of God; these are the evidences of his manifestation"[1]. It is the gentleness, persuasiveness, and God-like love in which the Saviour appears, and the spiritual power against sin and against the greatest of terrors, that of sudden and awful death, which he imparts, that prove him to be God.

Specific reflection upon the nature of Christ early began. The apostolic fathers were engaged in the most direct and practical conflict with the sin of the pagan world. The source of their hope, the ground of their salvation, and their God they found in Jesus Christ. By faith in him they received forgiveness, and this was founded upon the great features of his redeeming work. These few doctrinal elements were enough to enable them to maintain the great conflict they were waging, and beyond them their thoughts did not generally go. Ignatius has a phrase or two which suggest later discussions[2]; but it was in

[1] *Ibidem*, vol. I., p. 27 f.

[2] "Begotten and unbegotten, passible and impassible", Eph. vii.; "who was before the eternities with the Father", Mag. vi.; "Christ his Son, who is his Logos, proceeding from silence", Mag. viii.; cf. Smyrn.i. and Eph. xviii.

general left to the apologists to begin the long series of studies upon this theme which was to result in the Chalcedon doctrine of perfect divinity and perfect humanity in the unity of one person.

The general course of argument in both apologists and polemics is from the Scriptures as an objective authority, and ordinarily excludes appeals to experience. Yet hints of a similar line of thought to that above drawn out are not entirely lacking. For example, in Irenæus III. xix. 1, the argument for the superhuman character of Christ is from the "freedom" which the Christian has, lacking which men, of course, do not see what Christ is. Again, IV. xiii. 2, the liberation wrought by the Word produces "piety and obedience due to the Master of the household"; and in V. xvii. 3, the argument is from the remission of sins by Jesus to his divinity, which could scarcely have been made, had there been no subjective experience of forgiveness, although the proof adduced that he did forgive sins is the gospel record (Matt. ix. 2, 6).

Following, therefore, the line of more objective discussion, the apologists first develop the argument suggested by the Fourth Gospel, and thus advance the doctrine of the Logos. "When the race was sunk in sin and misery", says the Epistle to Diognetus, for substance, "God for a time endured this, that men might learn how impossible it was for them to save themselves.

Out of his infinite goodness he had, however, always determined to save men. This he did by revealing his purpose in his Son. He, the all-Ruler and all-Creator, did not send an angel or inferior being, but the very architect and builder of the whole, by whom he created the heavens. This was in fulfillment of a plan formed in eternity and communicated, in consequence of the relationship subsisting between them, to the Son, who was the Logos, who, speaking openly, revealed the truth. By him is the church enriched, from him comes all its instruction, through him is the tradition of the apostles preserved, and each individual teacher taught."

Justin and the other apologists under his lead advance a little upon this elementary and still quite biblical statement in the direction of certain theoretical elements designed to add something of a rationale. Their doctrine may be summarily stated in the following form:—God, who had from eternity wisdom in himself, before his works and as a beginning of the same, begat of himself by an act of his will a Son, who was another God, numerically distinct and yet not separate from himself. By this Son God created the worlds, revealed himself in the prophets and the Scriptures, appeared unto the patriarchs and others in the theophanies, was graciously present in all men, and produced everything good in the world, till at last this Son was miraculously born

of a virgin and as our Saviour lived and died in our behalf.

It is unnecessary to point out the elements of confusion in this brief summary, the ineffectual efforts to maintain the eternity of the Logos while ascribing to him generation, and to make him "another" from God that he might be a true agent in the work of creation and salvation while preserving the indivisible and unchangeable character of divinity. Such confusion belongs to the beginning of thinking on any obscure and complicated theme. Enough to say that from this point the thinking of the church steadily advanced under successive leaders. We may say that the divinity of Christ was questioned by no party in the church, not even primarily by those who ended in denying it. The one question all were seeking to answer was, What is this divine which is in Christ, and what its relation to the Father? The monarchians were jealous for the unity of God and sought such an answer as should harmonize with this ultimate and unsurrendered fact; and they finally said, some of them, Christ is a mere man, others, The divine in him is the divinity of the Father, appearing now under the form of the Son. Tertullian rather stuck close to Justin's form of thought and called the Son another person but not another being (*alius* not *aliud*) and emphasized his subordination, vacillating however in his forms of expression

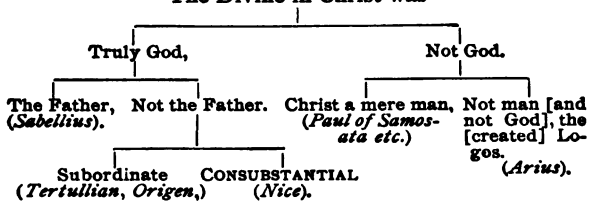
and leaving unremoved obscurities of idea. Origen sought to gain a point of view from which the evident subordination of the Son and his perfect and true divinity might be reconciled, by declaring the eternity of the generation, thus distinctly advancing upon Justin; and yet, because the word "God" was for him an ambiguous word, and because he did not sharply distinguish between the creature and the creator, he could not so state his teaching that it was fitted to become a permanent part of the doctrine of the church. Christ was not the "principle", nor the "fountain of deity", nor ὁ θεός, but only θεός, a "second god", "the god who comes after the Father in all things."

In such a slow progress of thinking, where so many elements of thought are mingled in apparently hopeless perplexity and uncertainty, it ordinarily requires the shock of some one great event to startle men into clear apprehension and final crystallization of their substantial belief. Such a shock was given in this case by the rough and coarse doctrine of Arius, upon which the conclusion arrived at in the Council of Nice followed as rapidly as in chilled water the crystals of ice will sometimes form when the containing vessel receives a blow. Arius sought a real explanation of the divine in Christ. It was not what Sabellius had said, the Father himself; it could not be another, and an independent deity; it must therefore be a created being "advanced"

to deity because of the perfection of its character and its infinitely valuable work of redemption. The Council became clear under the lead of Athanasius, that this was a false solution and finally settled upon that form of stating Christ's divinity which has ever since maintained its place, that he is "consubstantial" with the Father.

As to this conclusion certain things ought to be noted. First, the character of Christian thinking for completeness and logical accuracy ought to be emphasized. Every possible logical solution of the problem was suggested and all rejected for various good reasons except the one finally adopted[1]. On the side of logical accuracy the discussion, therefore, leaves nothing to be desired, and has never been surpassed in the annals of thought. Again, the Council of Nice was in fact ahead of its age, and what it thus successfully set forth could not at once be received. It was therefore followed by a series of discussions, ex-

[1] The different solutions advanced may be arranged by exhaustive dichotomic division as follows:—


The Divine in Christ was
Truly God,
Not God.
The Father, (Sabellius).
Not the Father.
Christ a mere man, (Paul of Samosata etc.)
Not man [and not God], the [created] Logos. (Arius).
Subordinate (Tertullian, Origen,)
CONSUBSTANTIAL (Nice).

We see thus, at a glance, that no other suggestion is logically possible.

tending over the following fifty-six years, in which every illogical as well as every logical form of solution was discussed. But from this fuller and often passionate discussion, the church returned to accept finally at Constantinople what had been affirmed at Nice, and to carry it on unchanged to Chalcedon after seventy years more, whence it has been brought down still unchanged to us.

What then has careful historical criticism to say upon the soundness of this development,—for development there is here, from the simple biblical form of Ignatius' expressions, through all the confusion of Justin, to the highly technical expressions of the two great councils. Does the doctrine that Christ is God "begin in a germ actually present in the recorded instruction of Jesus Christ and his apostles"? Most emphatically we must say, Yes; the proof having been already drawn out at length. Again, Does it "proceed according to the laws of logical sequence"? In the broadest meaning of this enquiry we must at once answer, Yes; for we have seen that the discussion exhausted the field of logical possibilities. In the narrower sense, whether the arguments used to support the Nicæan thesis were valid to our present thinking, we shall have something more to say shortly; but we may now answer, Yes; for the assent of Christian thinkers is still given to-day to this thesis, and we have ourselves seen that it accords with

that particular style of argument which we are here considering, the experiential. Thirdly, Does it agree with other doctrines? This we may leave till we come to those doctrines in the progress of discussion, except as we may even now remark that it is confessedly the fundamental doctrine on which the "evangelical system" is built, and must therefore be consistent with the successive features of that system. And, finally, Does it agree with sound biblical exegesis? Our answer must be that consubstantiality alone can satisfy the demands of Jn. i. 1: "the Word was *with* God ['con' a difference of some sort], and *was* God [the substance, deity, being common to both]", and of all those passages which predicate of Christ the reception of divine attributes and offices, creation, judgment, etc.

Thus we say, the voice of general Christian experience, as expressed by the deliberate results of Christian thinking is for that doctrine for which our own individual experience speaks, the Godhead of Christ. And we confirm our analysis of history by that other canon of Newman's, "chronic vigor", for the doctrine has survived till this day.

The churches of New England, at any rate, have evidence to give as to its survival. One hundred years ago a movement was begun there, which soon gained control of polite society, or professional life, of the principal ancient churches, and of the university, that wrote upon

its banners as its distinguishing sign and battle-cry the denial of the true deity of the Son. It seemed as if the ancient theology had received its death blow, for what could the remaining churches promise of strength or courage or strenuous contest or final victory when they had lost their leaders, their prestige, and apparently the most valuable portion of their membership, when to every other taunt this was added that they were groping in the darkness of mediæval obscurities and of still more ancient ignorance and superstition, when all the light and progress of the modern era were declared against them? But they rallied! Their churches now number in the original seat of the controversy, the State of Massachusetts, as many as the churches of the defection in the whole country, and it is by these churches, confessing both the Father and the Son, that the American work of foreign missions was begun and a large part of American home missionary labor has been performed. The theology of Nice proves itself to have vital power to-day as of old! There is now no strong and aggressive Christian church, full of good works, and historically deserving the name first given the disciples at Antioch, which is not established upon the Nicene foundation.

Before we leave the Council of Nice one thing more needs to be noted. In a sense the strength of the Council itself, as of the long and bitter controversy thereafter, centered in the person of Ath-

anasius. We have at hand fortunately the means for determining the grounds upon which Athanasius rested his belief, for he not only became the central figure at Nice but the principal disputant upon the side of the Council in subsequent years, and his voluminous writings enable us to follow the course of his thought minutely. His predecessor Alexander, seems both to have received the results of previous thinkers' labor as a tradition and to have arrived by his own reflection at mature and settled results; for he was at once ready to meet the Arian proposals with a counter statement which leaves little to be desired for clear presentation of the true deity of the Son. Athanasius was trained therefore in an atmosphere where the main proposition, that Christ was God, was taken as a fundamental Christian truth, not itself open to further questioning and furnishing the standard by which other doctrine was to be tested. He became remarkably familiar by his own study with the Scriptures and gained his chief and decisive arguments in favor of the orthodox position from them. The "Orations against the Arians" are one continuous exegetical argument, and none can say that on the whole the exegesis does not reproduce the true meaning of the Bible. There are faults of interpretation arising from the defects of exegetical science in those days, such as the introduction of irrelevant texts, and the free employment of allegory; but the latter mode of treatment was forced

on Athanasius by his adversaries in respect to Proverbs viii. 22 ff: "The Lord created [LXX. ἔκτισέ] me a beginning of his ways, for his works"; the text in reference to which his chief exegetical sins are committed, and the use of irrelevant texts is sometimes the result of the conviction that the divinity of Christ, being in Scripture, is reflected or suggested at many points where it is not strictly proved, so that such texts have a bearing, even if not capable of serving as primary proofs. Yet the argument in form and in spirit is a refutation of error, rather than the fresh and original establishment of a truth. That truth for Athanasius is already established. He is now concerned in showing how every suggestion of the Arians, instead of helping to interpret or defend the truth, corrupts or destroys it. The Lord Jesus Christ is "God and Son of the Father", and the decisive question is "Which of these two theologies [the orthodox or the Arian] sets him forth thus" (i. 9)? He charges upon his opponents error in method, that they begin with the humanity and strive to rise to deity, whereas they should begin with the other, since the deity admits of no question (iii. 29 ff. and 35). Then they make Christ a creature so that he cannot be God, whereas he is God and therefore cannot be a creature. Of such arguments there are many; but they are not the sole or the fundamental arguments, however much the exigencies of the debate may compel their amplification and

reiteration. Thus Athanasius, says Thomasius, "does not delay upon the more dialectical replies, he goes to the root of the antagonism, to the inconsistency of Arianism with the Christian consciousness of redemption, and emphasizes this with striking power. The proposition to which Arianism, in spite of all its turnings and evasions, always comes back finally, the proposition that the Son is a creature, absolutely annihilates Christianity. Christianity is essentially on the one hand redemption from sin and death, on the other reunion of fallen humanity with God. 'Such redemption and restoration no creature is able to effect but only he who is at once man and in essence one with God. Only the incarnate God can redeem man from sin and curse and death, only God can unite the creature with God [hence the necessity of incarnation, death, and resurrection]. If the Son were a creature, he could not have taken away sin and the curse of sin, conquered death, and communicated life; we should still be lying in death, under the old curse, still unclothed with immortality, not glorified with Christ. Had he become man as a creature, man had remained what he was before, not united with God; for how could a creature be united with the Creator by a creature, or what help could come from like to like, since it needed itself like help? How could the Logos, if he were a creature, undo God's sentence and remit sin, since this is the prerogative of God alone? In a

word, how could a transitory being forgive sin? But the Lord forgave it and thereby shewed that he was in truth the one Logos and the image of the Father who alone judges and forgives sin. For man had not been deified if joined to a creature, or unless the Son were very God; nor had man been brought into the Father's presence, unless he had been his natural and true Word who had put on the body. And as we had not been delivered from sin and the curse unless that which the Word put on had been by nature human flesh (for we should have had nothing common with what was foreign), so also man had not been deified unless the Word who became flesh had been by nature from the Father and true and proper to him. For the union was of this kind in order that he who is man by nature might become one with him who is God by nature, and thus his salvation and deification might be made sure'."[1]

Few of us will probably sympathize with the details of Athanasius' arguments. His realism, and his consequent thought of a union with God effected for humanity by the incarnation as a physical fact, of a change essentially ethical effected without the action of the moral nature of man, are not to-day very acceptable,—from my own point of view altogether erroneous. But his

[1] "*Dogmengeschichte*," I., p. 211. The quotations are somewhat freely put together from *Contra Ar.*, II., 67-70, cf. III., 33.

main thought is a simpler one, which we shall find reproduced in all our minds, the conviction that the depth of our necessity is too great for any being to explore except God himself. It is essentially the argument which gives us our Christian doctrine of God. We know the world and we know ourselves; only a divine Saviour is sufficient for us.

We should pause to note that, sharply as Kaftan and the Ritschlians criticize the ancient doctrine for its realistic and physical aspects, at this vital point in the development of Christian doctrine they all, even Harnack, concede its correctness. Much as Harnack disagrees with and dislikes Thomasius, he agrees with him in his estimation of the "immortal service" (Thomasius, *op. cit.*, p. 219) rendered by Athanasius, who, he says, "saved the Christian church" (Harnack, *Doggsch.*, II., p. 221). He thinks that Athanasius saved "religion", that is personal relation to God in redemption, which Arius would have buried beneath a philosophical cosmology that would have converted Christianity into a mere system of intellectual speculation. At this point, then, the thirst for "knowledge" did not corrupt Christian doctrine.

We have thus found the doctrine of the divinity of Christ founded in our personal experience of grace and in the universal experience of the church, both primitive and later. But the Council at Nice did more than declare that the Son

was God, being consubstantial with the Father. The Nicæno-Constantinopolitan creed formulated a doctrine of the Trinity, for it confessed its belief in the Father, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life. This doctrine is not so immediately derived from Christian experience as the other; but it will be worth our while to see in what respects experience both prepares for and confirms it.

To solve this problem we retrace our steps and begin again at the beginning of all Christian life, with the original and ultimate fact of the new birth. That event emphasizes in consciousness the idea of law, and associates with God, as he appears before the soul in the process of its reflection upon its experiences, the attribute of law-giver; for conscience which creates the conviction of law for us, is the work of our Creator, and must utter his voice and not any merely subjective imagination of our own. And those further experiences and moral intuitions and convictions, of responsibility and guilt and condemnation, the soul also projects into the objective world and concludes that God recognizes the personality and responsibility of every sinner, and will visit every such one with his displeasure.

But, now, God appears in a second aspect, which is in no way derivable from this first aspect alone. This speaks condemnation and testifies of justice and involves separation and distance between Creator and creature, Law-giver

and law-breaker. No one could infer from such a fact as to God that he would move out of that isolated and severe sphere of condemnation and opposition and begin a work of regeneration in sinful souls by assembling about them the infinite motives of the divine love leading to self-recognition and self-condemnation, to repentance and to submission. But God does thus reveal himself, and it is upon the shining path furnished by the rays of such illuminating and kindling light that the soul actually ascends to the knowledge of God. Moreover the revelation of God does not stop here; for now a third thing not merely unexpected but paradoxical occurs. This second aspect of God, however impossible to infer from the first, does not appear contradictory of it and thus seem paradoxical. If there can be any end conceived, it does not diminish the justice of God that he should move the sinner towards repentance. But when he forgives, when he reverses justice, when he causes self-condemnation to cease within the Christian's soul, when he appears as Saviour, then he has done something which experience does not explain. It accepts it; but it does not understand it. And so God appears in three distinct relations before the soul in its first living contact with him; relations so distinct that they appear to reflection first unexpected, and then in part contradictory.

But Christian experience does not stop with the new birth. This is the ultimate, but it is the

initial fact of the Christian life, a fact followed by others as germination is followed by growth of stem, leaf, branch, and flower. This growth discloses many things. Christ once accepted as God, many revealing activities get associated with him. "Cosmology", as Harnack styles it, has no religious interest to him as a merely scientific theme, but as the beginning of salvation the creation of the world by Christ becomes of great interest to him, as well as the primal revelation antecedent to the advent, whether by theophany or prophecy. Preserver of all things and goal of the universe, the exalted King displays new sides of the character of him who was in the beginning with God. But none of these or other relations or activities in which Christ is found to stand or manifest himself are in any way inconsistent with the primal office of the "expression of God's person, and the radiance of his glory". And further, there is a continuation of the work of regeneration in sanctification. On one side, these works are identical; for, as regeneration is the persuasive application of motives to the will leading it to the initial step of conversion, so there is a constant persuasive activity of God in maintaining the faltering Christian life by the continued presentation of incitements to resist evil and do good. And so the divine Spirit appears as awakener, teacher, inspirer, medium of communion with God (Ro. viii. 15, 26), and sanctifier. Thus there are three ever enlarging rela-

tions in which the Christian soul stands with God; but further than these three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, no distinct divine agencies appear operative in any Christian experience.

We say "any". There are no more in the Scriptures. While there is no developed doctrine of the trinity in the Bible expressed in the forms of Nice, or in other theological formulations, the attitude of the New Testament writers is evidently that which we have found as we have traced the developments of our own experience. They refer all these separate offices which we have referred to the Son and the Spirit, to the same, and in the same way. They mention no others. And when apostles wish to supplicate the fulness of the divine blessing for some beloved church, for Corinth, or Philippi, or Rome, they can ask only for the love of God, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. Thus are exhausted both the fulness of the divine blessing and the number of the divine persons. It is the doctrine of the trinity in simple experiential expression. It is the outflow of the primal intuition of the Christian that everything about our salvation, both in its inception and in all its long development and perfection, comes from God and has its eternal ground in his nature.

The modern German school of experiential theologians originated by Albrecht Ritschl will object strongly to the course of our argument and to our result. All these themes have no "inter-

est" to the Christian, that is, in no way contribute to his Christian life. It is true, there is an economical trinity, for God does sustain the three relations of Father, Redeemer, and Spirit, or manifests himself in three ways. But as for the "ontological relations" of these personal expressions of God, for the pre-existence of Christ, etc., they are of no "interest" to us, and do not belong in Christian theology, whatever may be true about them or not true. As we look at Christ we behold God in the only sense in which it is of any importance that we should know him, as coming to us in forgiving love. Christ has divine attributes, because he has perfect love, and is unchangeably superior to the world; and he exemplifies these divine attributes in his perfect loyalty to his calling as the messenger of reconciliation, even when this involves submission to death. He is a being "filled with divine contents". All this is of the utmost importance to us. Christ excites towards God, the Father, and towards himself the liveliest feelings of confidence, affection, and loyalty. He does this because of his manifested character. But his pre-existence is of no importance to us. It separates between him and us rather than unites us with him, for it carries him away into a sphere where we know nothing of him and come in no contact with him. And thus, to say the least that can be said, it is, in the Ritschlian view, altogether outside the true sphere of Christian

theology. Ritschl himself, according to his son Otto, believed as truly in the deity of Christ as in the existence of God; but it remained for him an unexplained paradox, like the co-existence of divine sovereignty and human freedom, and when he made any positive affirmation as to the nature of Christ, it was always this, A mere man with divine contents.[1]

But this is all an exaggerated subjectivism. One might as well go a little further and say that the existence of God himself is of no "interest" to us, that nothing is required to constitute a genuine religious experience but the recognition of duty and the voluntary assumption of its obligations. God himself we can never see; and if we view him as existing in eternity, we "separate him from us rather than bring him near," because we create the impassable gulf between him and us which necessarily separates the infinite from the finite. If man recognizes the law of his being and obeys it, that is enough. So we might say, and so theoretical atheists and modern agnostics have often said; but they have never carried the assent of Christian thinkers.

We need not only subjective experience of which we are perfectly certain as subjective, but also an objective ground for the same. Chris-

[1] For more detailed criticisms see Dr. James Orr's book upon the Ritschlian theology, and articles upon Christology in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* by the lecturer in the volume for the year 1896.

tian thinking demands this by the unavoidable law of the human mind. We pass from the phenomena of the soul and the world to God, and by a similar and equally necessary process of reasoning we pass from what we know of Christ, from his work in our souls, and from the attributes he manifests in human history, from his "divine contents", to his own divinity. We ascribe reality to this divinity, and then we ask, What conception of that divinity is necessary to form a consistent view of God and of Christ? And the answer to that question, the only possible answer under the conditions imposed by Christian thinking, is his consubstantial divinity.

This result, we maintain in opposition to Ritschl, is of the utmost "interest" to the Christian. He cannot sustain that attitude of perfect reliance upon Christ which Christian piety actually demands nor look to him for the divine gifts of forgiveness and sanctification unless he believes him to be truly God, not merely a man in moral harmony with God. We cannot join the pagans of Greece and Rome in deifying men. We cannot trust ourselves to a mere man however good. The person we believe in, that very man Jesus Christ, must be somehow, in some reality of his being, the personal God. As such he must have the attributes of God, he must be eternal. It is only as we view Christ as eternal that we view him at all as God. A temporal, temporary Christ is not God. And when he manifests "su-

periority to the world", as Ritschl says he must, capable of imparting itself to me, I must know whether it is a real "superiority", amounting to a "dominion", whereby he is able to take me under his almighty protection and secure my salvation, or whether it is only ideal, and merely means that he could die for duty's sake. So can I, and so have thousands who had no Christian hope to sustain them. But what I need is real, objective, almighty, world-controlling and universe-governing, truly divine, dominion. That is what excites my "interest", moves my "feelings of pleasure", and gives me the hope of eternal life. But in a mere god-like man, who in himself can only die, I have no such interest, in fact, I view the mere ideal, when it is presented to me as my Saviour, with positive pain and apprehension. If that is my only hope, I am, "of all men, most miserable".

How utterly Ritschl failed to understand the demands of Christian piety and how differently the universal church views its Lord, Jesus Christ, may be seen, as by a single glance of the eye, in the hymns which have found an universal currency. That most majestic hymn, the *Te Deum Laudamus,* which might well be styled the universal hymn of the modern as of the ancient church, praises God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and when it bursts into its fullest harmonies it is to sing: "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ, thou art the everlasting Son of the Fa-

ther." And in the *Gloria in Excelsis*, it is to the "only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father," that the prayer for forgiving mercy goes up. These hymns have thrilled the Christian generations, and no Christian to-day can hear them with an intelligent apprehension of their meaning without profound emotion. They not only bear on their wings the petitions of a praying church and are intrinsically fit to do so; but represent that vital element, the removal of which would clip the wings of soaring praise and aspiration, stifle the voice of supplication, chill the emotions of the Christian heart, and leave the struggling soul undefended in the temptations of the world; for, in varying figure, armor, vital heat and light, golden chains lifting up towards heaven and binding the soul to the feet of God, and more, is the belief of the Christian in Christ as truly God. We face a revived Gnosticism in this new agnostic subjectivism of the Ritschlians, against which we must join with the Polemics of the third century in confessing Jesus Christ "truly" God and "truly" come in the flesh.

We may expect that the Ritschlian school in general will abandon the position of Ritschl, as Kaftan has clearly done. In the *Dogmatik* (page 438 ff.) he says: "What Ritschl maintains, that Christ is not revealed to us in the inner equipment of his nature, and that he possesses importance for us not as a developing character,

but as one complete, is correct. . . . . But it does not follow therefrom that dogmatics need not concern themselves with these questions. On the contrary, consequences arise here which form essential elements in that view of history and of the world which results from Christian faith. We cannot fail to draw them, because faith assumes that its doctrines possess objective truth. Without drawing these conclusions the knowledge (*Erkenntniss*) of the faith would seem to lack reality." He then goes on to say that the Trinity embraces the truth as to the very essence (*Wesen*) of deity. "God would not be what he is without revelation in the Son and communication through the Holy Spirit." No "ideal" pre-existence of Christ can meet the necessities of the case. "We can formulate the truth," he adds, "only in some such way as this: Jesus is, according to his godhead, eternally in God; and we must admit the concept of his pre-existence as the sensuous expression for this truth, confining it, however, strictly within the proper limits."

But we must hasten on from this to other topics. We pause to call attention briefly to the self-imposed limitations of the argument hitherto, and to the possibility of its indefinite expansion, now that the object of that limitation is attained. We have drawn our principal arguments upon the subject of this lecture, the Person of Christ, as before, from the immediate consciousness of the Christian and from the experiences

arising in, or in immediate connection with, the new birth. We have gained in solidity of argumentation, but we have lost somewhat in variety, extent, and perhaps to some minds in that cogency conveyed by an argument from the broader field of the more general and more vividly felt experience of maturer and later years. Our discussion will therefore seek no longer to confine itself to the facts of immediate consciousness, but will now speak with less of accurate discrimination, of Christian experience as the general result in mind and heart of what is known by original perception and what is confirmed, however gained, by the conformity which it proves to have to this more original, and to all other Christian knowledge. And, as we turn from our present topic, we linger a moment to remark that the true deity of Christ has one of its most conclusive confirmations to many minds in its practical usefulness as a promotive of Christian piety. If, on the one hand, the true humanity of Christ has been the source of strength as the pledge and proof of his knowledge of our human limitations, and his consequent sympathy with us, so that men have dwelt with edification on his weariness in journeying, his hunger, his agony in Gethsemane, and all his human experiences, still on the other hand the growth of the church in grace has been by the knowledge of his divine perfections. It has been when men have taken every recorded word of his as the utterance of infinite wisdom,

and dwelling thereupon have extracted comfort from the fountain of divine perfection, when the critical attitude has been in abeyance and the child-like spirit of the pupil before the unsurpassable Master has taken its place, when his spiritual intuitions have been recognized as a divine act of his infinite nature and he has been confessed as no mere prophet of truth, but as himself the Truth, as he is the Way and the Life, that saints have arisen in the church whose holy character has excited the mingled reverence and awe of men. Nor have such men lost themselves in the vagaries of mysticism, for the great saints have been the great theologians,—Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Edwards,—as well as the great mystics. The ages of the adoration of Christ have been the ages in which the greatest hymns have been produced, for our greatest hymns are hymns to Christ; and they have been the greatest ages of missionary advance abroad and of church consolidation at home. The deepest significance attaches to the fact that in the Nicene age, Constantine, the founder of a new empire, put the cross before his legions as their sign of conquest, and that our American Nicene age, the beginning of this old and now passing nineteenth century, saw both the most vigorous defence of the true deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the most vigorous and successful preaching of salvation by his name, and the inauguration and early triumphs of American missions among the heathen. The

conquering cross is the sign of every Christian victory.

But it is the cross. The crown of kingship visible to men was a crown of thorns, the only throne ascended by the king upon earth was the altar of sacrifice. As human worship has gathered about Calvary, and the crucified Redeemer been the object of the faith and flaming devotion and adoration of men, so our theme, the person of Christ, is not complete till in the cross we contemplate also his work: which theme shall form the subject of our next lecture.

LECTURE V

THE WORK OF CHRIST

OUR last lecture brought us before the cross of Christ. The topic thus thrust upon us as the necessary completion of the work already undertaken is, at the same time, the next step in our larger task. The work of Christ centers where worship has contemplated it, in the cross; but we must postpone the direct treatment of this portion of the theme till we have prepared the way by a beginning at a remoter point.

That point is Christ's work of revelation. He reveals God. This is an objective fact. When the analysis of the motives operating upon the soul in conversion was performed, we saw how they came from Christ, and how the same line of proof which ascribed them to a divine personality, made Christ himself divine. Thus he is God for us, in our experience; and thus the God known by us, the God revealed. His life and words are the revelation of duty. And, as he is more fully known, and in the later experience of the Christian is taken as daily teacher through the written record of his earthly ministry, and through the agency of a present and guiding

Spirit, who unfolds to us his meaning (Jn. xvi. 13, 14), he reveals to us many things more, the things which "eye hath not seen, ... which God hath prepared for them that love him." Thus is exemplified—I will not say justified, for it is a justification by experience, a true exemplification—the claim to be the Truth itself which our Lord, with either the simplicity of absolute veracity, or with the most astounding blasphemy made for himself. *"Aut Deus, aut homo non bonus."* He speaks with the knowledge of one who came from Heaven (Jn. iii. 31), out of the memories of converse with the Father (iii. 32, v. 20), of what he has known by divine intuition (iii. 11, viii. 38), because he himself knows (viii. 40) and is Light (i. 4) and Truth (xiv. 6). He claims most immediate acceptance (iii. 16) and unreserved obedience (xiv.15) for his message. Nothing is to be preferred to him and his commands (Matt. x. 37). He speaks "with authority" (vii. 29), as one requiring no support from others and leaving no room for question and contradiction. No teaching could be more absolute or more clothed with the forms and claims of a final authority. And, being what he is to Christian experience, he could teach in no other way. What he himself says is, therefore, in the form in which it is handed down to us in the Bible, God's word, the very truth of the living and present God.

When the Christian reads the Old Testament,

which is, of course, not the record of the teachings of the historical Christ, he finds them to be more than the mere teachings of a Moses, a David, and an Isaiah. Paul saw this, and said that Israel drank in the wilderness of the "spiritual Rock, that followed them, and that Rock was Christ". We meet in those old pages with what I may call the essential Christ, the eternal Christ, who manifests himself by the character of his shining works, just as he shows what he is in our conversion by the divine beauty and glory of all his operation upon us. In the darkness of a people just come out of slavery under a pagan civilization, beneath the awful rocks of Sinai, we hear the accents of Calvary in that marvellous proclamation: "Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness and truth; keeping loving kindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty" (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7). The voice that summarizes the law in the two precepts: "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God, with all thy heart" (Dt. vi. 5), and "thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. xix. 18), is Christ's whether heard in the Old Testament or the New (Matt. xxii. 37-9). All the preaching of repentance by the prophets is his preaching, whose first sermon in Galilee was, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And that long prophecy of the Messiah, that gradual rise of the Messianic ideal and con-

sciousness of the people, the successive steps by which the mere earthly descendant of David was replaced by a King of greater splendor than any mere man could wear, and by which the hints of sorrow and the lesson of the discipline of humanity scattered through the sacred history got their final culmination and interpretation in the fifty-third of Isaiah, with its picture of glory by the way of suffering and kingship through sacrifice, —that exhibits the touch of him who knew the end from the beginning and was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The "Spirit of Christ in" the prophets "testified" (1 Pet. i. 11), and thus their words are the words of Christ. And in the epistles and prophecy of the New Testament the same thing appears. The promise of the last discourse (Jn. xvi. 13) was fulfilled so that Paul could say, "We have the mind of Christ"; which mind is clear to the eye of Christian experience in the preëminence which New Testament Scripture, like experience itself, gives to Christ, the central figure both of the renewal of the soul and of the progress of the Christian life. It is, therefore, not essential to emphasize the claims of apostles and prophets to speak with authority, to lay overmuch weight upon their verbal forms of expression, on their declarations that thus and thus "saith the Lord", on their anathemas uttered against the preacher of any other gospel, though he were an "angel from heaven", for these things concern more

them whose ears have not been opened. The essential teaching of Christ is throughout the Bible, and where the teaching is, there is the essential Christ, there God, and there the authority of God speaking to his creature man, and to his new-created child.

This is the developed "testimony of the Spirit to the Bible as the Word of God" which has been already adduced as proof of a higher character in the Bible than that of a mere record of Christian experience. The Bible is now seen to be permeated with the teaching of Christ, and this teaching possesses divine authority. Thus experience has carried us beyond experience. Experience gives us the authority of Christ, and the authority of Christ is the authority of the vehicle of his pre-incarnate and post-incarnate teaching.

Our object in these lectures is, however, scientific accuracy of reasoning and of statement. Not the popular and general form of definition and proof, but only the close, exact, formal, and justified, can answer our present purpose. We are required, therefore, to scrutinize our position with the eye of a critic possibly hostile to us, and satisfy his reasonable demands upon us.

Our former argument was simple. Certain vital truths were made known to us in the experience of the new birth as indisputably certain. We found our knowledge of them to be grounded in the action of God upon us. We then found the same truths in the Bible as its central and dis-

tinguishing portion. We ascribed to these truths in the Bible the same divine origin they had had in our experience. But now, further analysis has given us further truth and particularly this, of the divinity of Christ. The Bible teaching comes largely from him; therefore, so far as it does, it is divine. And, then, by anticipation of proofs which are yet partly to be delivered, other elements of experience are found to be mirrored in the Bible, till the general inference is drawn that whatever is in the Bible will be found to be divine. In fact, the Bible precedes experience; and Christian faith, taking the Bible as its authority, and receiving its teaching as true, though their truth may not be at once evident, finds them confirmed by experience, by the perfection with which they adjust themselves to that which has been already accepted and become certain. Thus the natural supposition at any point, that what has so far been found true will be found so still further, is justified, and the Scriptures are received as authoritative as a whole.

Now, it may be said, as was briefly noted in an earlier lecture, that such authority is no authority. The argument establishes the Bible as a book of experience, but not as an authority in spheres into which experience does not and cannot enter. Hence I am never brought by it to the position where I am ready to accept what the Bible says simply because it says it, that is, to a recognition of a proper biblical authority. The Bible remains

in some respects as dependent on me as in others I am dependent upon it. We are now prepared for a more thorough and a final treatment of this objection.

In a large degree the objection must be conceded; and we would concede it immediately and frankly. The argument from experience is not the only argument as to the Scriptures, and it does not profess to cover all the ground or to affirm anything for or against positions which are not involved in its own line of proof. It will still remain a question, after experience has said all that it has to say, whether scientific and historical matters are, or are not, included in the scope of God's purpose in reference to the Bible and in the consequent authority of the Bible. That question must be left for other times. The question now is whether in realms where spiritual experience can reach and testify, in the realms of religion and morals, in matters pertaining to God and our duty to him, the Bible has authority. Whatever must be believed as to the origin of man after Genesis teaches he was "created" and science says he was "evolved", our present question is another, viz., what is to be believed when Jesus says that the wicked, condemned at the day of judgment, shall go away into "everlasting punishment"? Now, at this point and others like it, so far as the implications of Christian experience are concerned, the Bible has no authority in the sense of being an outward tribunal, con-

firmed as such by some process of installation, as a judge may be set on the bench by royal proclamation, every word it utters being thus externally certified as divinely empowered to teach; but it has the authority of probable truth. Each particular statement is to be believed because it is organically associated with what we know by independent knowledge; because it proceeds ultimately from a person whom we recognize as God; because the Bible has hitherto led us along a path which we found shining with increasing light; and because we may reasonably trust it further. It has all the authority which attaches to matters within the realm of probable reasoning, a very high degree of authority, to which it would be most unreasonable to refuse recognition. In this sense and to this degree, our argument does establish the authority of the Bible. The Christian will continue to bow to it when he cannot see, in the future as in the past.

A very shallow objection to authority in religion seems to prevail in certain quarters. It seems to be thought that we cannot have authority here at all from the very nature of the case; that I must be able to see conclusively with my own mental eyes everything which I believe, and cannot accept the testimony of any one for what I cannot thus see. Only self-digested and finally evident truth can have any power to elicit my belief. It is not necessary to refute this objection at any great length. The practical methods of

every science and the experience of every day refute it. None of us here could give proof of the doctrine of gravitation calculated to satisfy the mind of a Newton, who waited years before enunciating it because the moon did not seem to have exactly the orbit the theory required; and yet we believe it. Every scientific observer is daily making use of facts as the basis of his reasonings which he has never observed himself but only received by the report of others. A man may certainly believe in the existence of angels upon the testimony of one who credibly claims to have come from the heavenly world, if he can in that of the ornithorhynchous upon the testimony of travellers. Neither principles nor facts, the absolute proof of which is beyond me, are thereby debarred from entering into the structure of my knowledge, whether of natural science or of theology.

But the objection may be put in a more subtile way. It may be said that the witness as to the existence of angels is in no way like him who tells me that there is a duck-billed oviparous quadruped in Tasmania the like of which I have never seen. This witness does not pretend to have gone into a region where I could not go. He describes conditions which fit a portion of this earth. He cites the testimony of others, or he proves his general credibility by his characteristic conduct. He is a man like myself. Whereas that witness from heaven is unlike me, gives no

confirmation of his report, and speaks of things which in no way fit into the scheme of things with which I am already familiar. He must be believed ultimately as a matter of mere authority on his part and of mere belief on mine; and I cannot thus believe.

Of course not; and Christian thinkers make no such demand upon the credulity of any one. There must be verification for the claims of any witness. I must be able to see for myself that he is worthy of credence. He must in some sort be of my kind, speak in a language I can comprehend, and confirm his claims by facts that I can myself control. But every one of these things is true of Jesus Christ according to the argument sketched in this discussion. He is a man like me; he speaks of spiritual realities in terms addressed to me; and he confirms his nature by his works in my inmost soul. Therefore I believe him when he speaks of what I cannot so immediately test. First of all, I believe *him;* belief of his words follows thereupon.

But the Ritschlian objection still remains. Authority is of no advantage because only what is seen in the illumination of its own light and thoroughly comprehended can enter into the religious life, since this is, as we ourselves are maintaining, a matter of experience. We meet this position by entire denial. I may in no way see the proofs of gravitation or comprehend it, but if I believe it, even if only in the form that

solid bodies have weight, that belief will have the most important practical consequences for my daily life. And thus, the fear of a future judgment accepted on the mere authority of Christ, might have a decisive effect in strengthening and establishing my choice of virtue and my loyalty to God. It may heighten my view of his character and thus contribute to my love for him, though I may not be able to understand it in all its relations. This contention is against perceived facts of the Christian life.

In antithesis, then, to all these various contentions, we have reached a true biblical authority, the conviction derived from Christian experience that the Bible as a whole, in the realms to which alone experience can give testimony, and which alone are of present importance to us, is trustworthy as a guide to the truth. It is to be believed at any given point because it is generally credible, and until evidence shall be presented that at this point it is not credible; and, experience having as yet found no such error, its entire credibility is enhanced by all the details of the experiential examination. Experience has, therefore, now led us far beyond our original position that the Bible was valuable as a book of experience. It has given to us a book of instruction; and hence all that it teaches may now be said to be the teaching of Christian experience. Every biblical doctrine becomes thus, in a secondary sense, an experiential doctrine. And experience

coming in, as it does, to support the biblical doctrines in every case, confirms by the verification obtained through the experimental test what it has by another method already given. The proof of the last statement is the experiential examination of the entire system of evangelical doctrine.

We turn now from this first branch of the work of Christ, that of revelation, to the second, that of atonement. The paradox involved in forgiveness was perceived by the Christian at the moment of his conversion. He had known God as a lawgiver, condemning sin, and now he found him forgiving sin, and in this seemed to perceive, contradiction. Sometimes in the stress of agonized conviction sinners have refused to believe that forgiveness is possible, despairing of the good news of the gospel because it is so good. Their sense of the justice of God outweighs their belief in his goodness. And, however certain the practical solution gained by the experience of forgiveness, the intellectual difficulty remains, and can only be removed by an intellectual process. Hence the problem is one for Christian thought; but thought here, as well as in other realms which we have traversed, must be illuminated by experience, and will have to engage itself largely with the materials furnished by experience, if it is to give the most satisfactory solution.

We begin, therefore, this most eminently intellectual branch of our theme with the enquiry how,

in fact, the Christian reposes on the Christ in whom he believes? In what aspect is this Christ an object of faith and an accepted Saviour? The answer is simple and unquestionable,—Christ is viewed as a Saviour because he is the lamb of Calvary. If I were speaking in some circles I might feel called upon to justify this remark, for some in our own day have so modified our inherited theology as to remove the sacrificial death of Christ from the central point it occupies in the biblical account of his work, and their Christian experience may not seem to include the element they have banished from their theology. But for the present this may safely be dismissed as a case of abnormal experience. It is too remote from biblical standards and from the general belief and attitude of the historical church to need very much discussion. Paul's preaching was "the word of the cross": he presented "Jesus Christ and him crucified": Christ himself said he "came to give his life a ransom for many": and John the Baptist when introducing him to the people of Israel summed up his whole character and work in the pregnant phrase taken from the fifty-third of Isaiah, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world". About the cross have therefore centered both the faith and worship of the Christian church. For unnumbered centuries the *Gloria in Excelsis* has prayed: "O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that taketh away the sins of the world, have

mercy on us"; and when the Reformers broke away from the ancient church they continued to sing,

"O sacred Head, now wounded
'Tis I deserve thy place;
Look on me with thy favor,
Vouchsafe to me thy grace";[1]

and even the Puritan, who was literally as well as figuratively an iconoclast, wrote and sung, as his most beautiful hymn,

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died".[2]

In this work of Christ Christians have always seen something entirely unique, something done for man entirely beyond man's powers, and indispensable to his salvation. He becomes our Saviour because he does for us that which we cannot do for ourselves. True, in our own day, some have used phrases which carry an implicit denial of this view, as when we are told that we are to do after him what he has done before us; but one cannot believe that these words are intended to be applied to the sacrificial death of Christ, or at least not in their full meaning. There is, of course, a sense in which the Christian must imitate Christ's death, for he is "to take up his cross daily" and follow his Master; but in its highest meaning and fullest scope the death of Christ is

[1] Paul Gerhardt, 1656.
[2] Isaac Watts, 1707.

no more an object set for our imitation than the creation of the world. Christ is the divine Saviour, and nowhere more divine than in the precise work of salvation. He comes for the rescue of the absolutely lost: he does for them that which they are absolutely incapable of doing for themselves: he lays the foundation for their salvation by his death; and thus he performs therein a work peculiar to himself and absolutely unique in the whole history of the universe. These are the simplest and most ultimate elements of the Christian's view of his Lord.

Christian experience thus separates fundamentally from those who see no peculiar work wrought by the death of Christ, and sets such a construction aside as entirely un-Christian. It separates as really from all those who see in that great tragedy nothing but the death of a martyr bearing testimony to the truth he had preached. This view has lately gained much currency in certain quarters even among those who think that they still maintain the true deity of Christ; but it is essentially a Unitarian position. If Christ died as a martyr, why did he live as a God? Occasionally we hear explanations of his divinity from the advocates of a subjective moral theory of the atonement that he had God in him just as all good men have, except in greater degree. Here the denial of deity has consistently followed the denial of a divine work. It is true that Christ did die as a martyr, as it is that he was a prophet,

and that the Holy Spirit was given him "without measure"; but he was also a priest, and at the same time the victim, who came to take away sins by the offering of himself, and he made this offering through an Eternal Spirit. With none of these facts can the moral theory be made harmonious except by processes of verbal juggling that may have interest for men who enjoy play with words, but have no interest for a great church faced with the awful situation of a perishing world and entrusted with a gospel of salvation. While this church has never forgotten that the most moving display of the divine perfections was made upon Calvary, and thus never ceased to do justice to the truth conveyed by the moral theory, it has always designated the people of Christ as those "redeemed by his precious blood."[1]

If I have failed to carry any of my audience with me in this contention, I must leave the subject for their own meditations, and cannot doubt that if they seriously test their own experience by that of the whole church, they will finally come to the recognition of an objective atonement wrought on Calvary. That test is to be rigorously applied in the sequel of the present lecture. For now, therefore, we shall regard our brief review of the case sufficient, and lay down, as the foundation of our next discussion, the simple

[1] The *Te Deum*, one of the greatest of the creeds.

proposition that *Christ does for man in his sacrifice what man could not do for himself.*

And now, what does Christian experience see in that sacrificial death?

I must ask you here to look in upon your own souls as I speak. I shall describe what I myself see in the Calvary, and I must rely upon the coöperation of each one of you for whatever of illuminating or convincing power my presentation may attain. Each of you must ask himself, What do I see? What has really imprinted itself upon my soul as the total effect of all my experience and as my view of him when he dies for me?

I once came across a picture of the crucifixion by some Spanish artist which had wandered over the ocean to be exhibited at the great Chicago exposition. It was a realistic picture. There was nothing of the ecclesiastical conventionality of Catholic art about it. It presented the Saviour as he may have looked hanging on the literal cross near twenty centuries ago. On his head was the crown of thorns, and splashes of blood had fallen from its wounds upon his cheeks and shouders and breasts, and lay there in darkening crimson. From the nails through his palms, strained and torn and bloody, his body hung, sunk down in utter exhaustion, drawn and laboring for breath. But his head was partially raised, and while his eyes were closed as if their sight failed and about him the shadows of night had already gathered, his mouth was feebly opened

as if for the scarce articulate cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was a picture to afflict with horror and to fill with awe. But as I looked, I seemed to see certain things. What do you see?

1. The Christian sees in the death of Christ the magnitude of the guilt of sin. If Christ were viewed simply as an innocent sufferer, the question would be borne home upon the mind with great force, Why so great suffering? But when he is viewed as suffering for us, and it is understood that our sins nailed him to the tree, the magnitude of the suffering estimated in the light of his person, the greatness of the violence done to him who was not only guiltless and so deserving nothing of pain, but also infinite God and so deserving of every honor and of all holy happiness, magnifies the evil for which it was borne. What does God think of sin? He who would not suffer even his only-begotten Son to come into the world and become involved in its history, though sinless, without being involved also in the penalty of sin, the suffering of death, must have an infinite disapproval of that which he has thus permanently and unchangeably marked with pain and loss. Certainly God is not indifferent to sin! Forgiveness cannot come out of any light estimate of it, from any forgetfulness of that law written in conscience, from fickle change of purpose, or from anything undivine and unworthy of an infinite and infinitely holy God; for with the

forgiveness is thus ever bound up the eternal testimony of the cross against sin.

2. The sight of Calvary intensifies the Christian's self-condemnation. Was this for me? Have I led to all this by my sin? Have I not only set myself against the will of God and spread abroad ruinous influences among men, as I know I have, but have I occasioned such suffering by such a one? Then no words can express my true fault, as none can measure the greatness of this sufferer.[1]

[1] In Gerhardt's hymn, cited above, which was originally written by Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153), a saint of the Roman Catholic church, we read:

"What thou, my Lord, hast suffered
Was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But thine the deadly pain."

F. W. Faber writes in 1849:

"O love of God! O sin of man!
In this dread act your strength is tried,
And victory remains with love,
For Thou our Lord art crucified."

Another Catholic, Da Todi (1306), as translated by a Presbyterian, J. W. Alexander (1842), writes in the famous *Stabat Mater:*

"'Twas our sins brought him from heaven;
These the cruel nails had driven;
All his griefs for us were borne."

3. Whatever the obstacle to forgiveness may be, the impression is made by the death of Christ, that here is an adequate remedy. Indeed, the weight of the impression is not on the adequacy of the remedy: of course this is adequate, for greater remedy than the suffering of the innocent Son of God cannot be imagined. The mind views this at once as beyond question, and by reaction spends its entire force of reflection upon the thing remedied, on the greatness of the obstacle thus illustrated. In what does that lie? Partly at least, where experience has already found it, in the law of God which threatens a penalty that by forgiveness is ever uninflicted. But this obstacle is abundantly met, for no known object of law,—whether to display God's righteousness, to prevent the sin of man, or to provoke man to positive deeds of holiness,—could be better gained than by Calvary when its great event is understood to be connected with the sin of man. Who will sin carelessly that looks upon Calvary? Who will trifle with a God that afflicts for the sin of man even his own Son? Who doubt the

A. T. Russell (1851) wrote:

> "Ah, Lord, our sins arraigned thee
> And nailed thee to the tree."

And so, with innumerable examples, the position could be made impregnable, if it needed it, that Christians of all ages and churches have seen their own sins in the light of the sacrifice of Calvary.

infinite meaning and worth of a law thus sustained, and of the holiness it demands? Thus, if the obstacle be in the law, it is perfectly removed by the suffering of Calvary. Indeed, in some respects the law is more highly honored by the death of Christ than it would be by the punishment of the guilty. For, if it were possible to suspect that punishment might be inflicted by some mechanical contrivance and in some routine spirit, or in real indifference to the great things the law sets forth, when the punishment fell on the guilty parties who could perhaps not interest God much, on account of their very wickedness, there can be no possibility of doubting God's infinite earnestness and profound interest in everything involved in the law, when instead of letting men who have sinned go free on mere repentance, he has inflicted first, as the price of their redemption, such a chastisement upon his own Son, which is as if he had borne it upon the quivering strings of his own heart,—as without much figure of speech, he may be said truly to have done.

4. Thus the sacrifice magnifies righteousness, guilt, penalty, law, love, forgiveness; and thus the Christian experiences a peculiar satisfaction in contemplating his salvation as arising from the cross. Forgiveness is no longer a mere matter of subjective experience or certainty, however well founded these may appear. It has a recognizable objective ground. The peace which constitutes the Christian's sense of forgiveness now

gains in solidity and permanency, and as the sinner puts his trust in Christ as his Redeemer he feel a new joy in his surrender to a Victor who in triumphant death has shown himself "mighty to save". It is by no means certain that these inward experiences of the Christian could at all take place without their objective ground. We may not be able to say they could not, while speaking from the point of view of mere experience; but we certainly cannot say they could. They have something peculiarly objective about them. They occur though the soul resists. While the sinner still condemns himself, he finds peace; while he still fails to understand that he has complied with the conditions of salvation and supposes himself to be still under the wrath of God, he finds himself calm and filled with joy, unable, indeed, when he attempts it, to call back his feelings of self-condemnation. That has the appearance of something objective in its origin, though subjective in its experience; and that it could occur without an objective ground—such as is the sacrifice—is beyond the power of experience to declare. But, however this may be, the confirmation and establishment of peace in the sacrifice of him who is "our peace" is the indisputable experience of the church.[1]

[1] The following hymns will illustrate this statement. It is a remarkable fact that, taking them as I have from several modern hymn books in common use in American churches, I have found them chiefly not under the head

With this primary result of Christian experience already gained, we turn to the Bible for confirmation or correction. We are to employ it as a document of experience; but now, after its proper authority in the religious sphere has been established, we are to view it as more than this, as a standard of Christian experience, and one not merely such because it contains the original documents of Christianity but because it is the medium of revelation.

Our first recourse shall be to the sacrificial sys-

of the crucifixion of Christ, as one might imagine, but under the head of "salvation". We see thus how emphatically "salvation" is to the Christian salvation by the sacrifice of Calvary. Note also the differing ages, schools of thought, and types of mind suggested by the names of the writers.

Toplady (Calvinist, 1776):

"Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly:
Wash me Saviour, or I die!"

Matthew Bridges (Roman Catholic, 1848):

"Behold the Lamb of God!
Into the sacred flood
Of thy most precious blood
My soul I cast;
Wash me and make me clean within,
And keep me pure from every sin,
Till life be past."

tem of the Old Testament, for Christ indisputably was the true sacrifice of which the ancient sacrifices were types and prophecy. Recent interpretation of this system has been largely influenced and often controlled by the methods of comparative religion. The heathen religions of India, China, and even Egypt have been searched, as well as those of Greece and Rome, for light

Dr. Bonar (Presbyterian, 1857):

"Thy cross, not mine, O Christ,
Has borne the awful load
Of sins that none in heaven
Of earth could bear but God.
To whom save thee, who canst alone
For sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?

Thy death, not mine, O Christ,
Has paid the ransom due;
Ten thousand deaths like mine
Would have been all too few.
To whom, save thee, who canst alone
For sin atone, Lord, shall I flee?"

T. H. Gill (Episcopalian, 1864); from the hymn beginning "O mystery of love divine":

"For thee the Father's hidden face?
For thee the bitter cry?
For us the Father's endless grace,
The song of victory?
Our load of sin and misery
Didst thou, the sinless, bear?
Thy spotless robe of purity
Do we the sinners wear?"

upon the true nature of sacrifice, and the conclusion has generally been reached that sacrifices are gifts for the purpose either of expressing gratitude or of purchasing favor. And hence it has been frequently argued that the biblical sacrifices were the same, and particularly that they were not substitutionary. Occasionally, it is true, such

Sir H. W. Baker (Episcopalian, 1875); from the hymn "Oh perfect life of love":

> "And on his thorn-crowned head
> And on his sinless soul,
> Our sins in all their guilt were laid,
> That he might make us whole."

Joseph Grigg (English Presbyterian, 1765), in the hymn "Behold, a stranger at the door":

> "But will he prove a friend indeed?
> He will; the very friend you need;
> The Friend of sinners—yes, 'tis He,
> With garments dyed on Calvary."

I merely mention Cowper's (Episcopalian, 1779) "There is a fountain filled with blood"; Wesley's (Methodist, 1750) "Blow ye the trumpet, blow", with its strain,

> "Extol the Lamb of God
> The all-atoning Lamb;
> Redemption in his blood
> Throughout the world proclaim;"

Haweis' (Episcopalian, 1792) "From the cross uplifted high"; and Montgomery's (Moravian, 1819) "Come to Calvary's holy Mountain, Sinners ruined by the fall".

investigators have seemed to see that the Israelitish religion was peculiar and that it demanded a study by itself before it could be thus summarily included in the same category with all other religions. The scientific canon that each particular must be carefully examined before generalization formulates the logical conclusion, thus met with some recognition; but the recognition has generally been scant, and its effect upon the outcome inappreciable. The argument has too often remained, Because India offered nothing but gifts to its gods, Israel offered nothing but the same to Jehovah.

Within the confines of the Old Testament itself a similar process has evacuated its most distinct utterances of their meaning. Because a development in the ideas and symbolic rites of Israel can be traced with more or less certainty, the conclusion has been drawn that the later passages which yield a substitutionary explanation of sacrifice were dogmatic and ritual additions to the simpler and more genuine expressions of the original piety of the nation. The obscure has been preferred to the plain, doubtful intimations read between the lines to the intended meaning of the lines themselves, the early to the late, the rudimentary to the developed. The question has been whether the sacred history could be explained upon the hypothesis of naturalistic evolution; and when an affirmative answer has been extorted from the documents, then, because the

hypothesis had been assumed from the beginning to be true, the easy results of such a criticism have been proclaimed as the latest scholarship.

But we have already risen above the plane of this argument by means of the deliverances of experience. The process of revelation is no mere process of materialistic evolution, but a supernatural process. Evolution there may be; but it is an evolution under the guidance of a personal God, and its results, its latest ideas as well as its earliest, are the learning of those who were "taught of God". Viewed as a divine process, the meaning of the Old Testament revelation as to the significance of sacrifices is easy.

The earliest accounts of ritual which we have, make mention of the imposition of hands upon the head of the victim. That ceremony remains totally unexplained except that, in reference to the great day of atonement, there is an explanation, when by the same gesture and by distinct confession the sins of the people were "put upon the head of the goat", to be borne away into the wilderness. The same dim intimation that the victim took the place of the sinner was made in the ritual of the blood. It was sacred and could not be used as food because "the life was in it"; and this vehicle and symbol of life, when the victim had been slain, was to be poured out before the Lord, evidently in place of the forfeited life of the sinner which should have been rendered up.

If such facts as these admitted any other ex-

planation when taken simply by themselves, they admit no other when the great peculiarity of the Old Testament among early religious books is considered, its doctrine of sin. There is no such doctrine in Egypt, India, or Greece. If it began in some confusion of thought between the moral and the ceremonial, it grew in clearness of conception and expression, till it was understood to be the breach of a duty, the rupture of a covenant obligation, estrangement of heart from God, the beginning or the fulfillment of every form of evil. Our Christian doctrine of sin has no new elements, though some of them stand out in clearer relief against the revelation of God in Christ. Responsibility, liability to punishment, real guilt and ill desert,—these are its deepest elements, and these call for some real and profound remedy, such as the offering of life for life indicates.

Old Testament revelation as to the nature of sacrifice reaches its culmination of clearness in one passage in particular, the fifty-third of Isaiah. Here the suffering servant of Jehovah is said to have been "pierced for crimes that were ours crushed for guilt that was ours"—and "Jehovah made light upon him the guilt of us all." Says George Adam Smith: "Innocent as he is, he gives his life as a satisfaction to the divine law for the guilt of his people. His death was no mere martyrdom or miscarriage of human justice: in God's intent and purpose, but also by its own voluntary offering, it was an expiatory sac-

rifice. There is no exegete but agrees to this. By his death the Servant did homage to the law of God. By dying for it he made men feel that the supreme end of man was to own that law and be in a right relation to it, and that the supreme service was to help others to a right relation."[1]

It is from this position, gained by objective methods of interpretation from the Old Testament, that we are to decide on the relations of Israel's religion to those of the great heathen peoples,—and we shall find it a relation of emphatic contrast. Whatever historical critics may say, "there is no exegete but agrees to this", that the Old Testament sacrifices are substitutionary. And when the great sacrifice is considered, that is a substitution such as no "bull or goat", and no man or angel could make, for it is the substitution of the infinite Son of God in the place of a guilty race.

I add another quotation from Professor Smith, for in a remarkable passage he brings out an important aspect of our theme generally overlooked. He says:—

"But how did they get this knowledge [viz., that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all]? They do not describe any special means by which it came to them. They state this high and novel truth simply as the last step in a process of their consciousness. At first they were bewildered by the Servant's suffering; then they thought it con-

[1] "The Book of Isaiah", vol. II, p. 364.

temptible, thus passing on it an intellectual judgment; then, forced to seek a moral reason for it, they accounted it as penal and due to the Servant for his own sins; then they recognized that its penalty was vicarious and that the Servant was suffering for them; and, finally, they knew that it was redemptive and the means of their own healing and peace. This is a natural climax, a logical and moral progress of thought. The last two steps are stated simply as facts of experience following upon other facts. Now, our prophet usually publishes the truths with which he is charged as the very words of God, introducing them with a solemn and authoritative Thus saith Jehovah. But this novel and supreme truth of vicarious and redemptive suffering, this passion and virtue which crowns the Servant's office, is introduced to us, not by the mouth of God, but by the lips of penitent men; not as an oracle but as a confession, not as a commission of divine authority, laid beforehand on the Servant like his other duties, but as the conviction of the human conscience after the servant has been lifted up before it. In short, by this unusual turn of his art, the prophet seeks to teach us that vicarious suffering is not a dogmatic but an experimental truth. The substitution of the Servant for the guilty people and the redemptive force of that substitution are no arbitrary doctrine for which God requires from man a mere intellectual assent; they are no such formal in-

stitutions of religion as mental indolence and superstition delight to have prepared for their mechanical adherence; but substitutive suffering is a great fact of human experience whose outward features are not more evident to men's eyes than its inner meaning is appreciable by their conscience and of irresistible effect upon their whole moral nature."[1]

The New Testament takes up the doctrine where the Old drops it. John the Baptist introducing Jesus to his work, commends him to those who became his chief disciples by the words: "Behold, the Lamb of God", by which direct reference was made to the fifty-third of Isaiah. When Jesus himself began to speak of his characteristic work it was with the phrase "the Son of Man came to minister and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mk. x. 45). The phrase is unexplained by its context. Who is redeemed? From what? To whom is the price of redemption paid? No answer is made to such inquiries. We are left long without any indication as to their proper solution, till at the Last Supper our Lord himself again speaks of his death and this time designates his blood as "the blood of the new covenant shed for many unto the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28). He thus connects his death in thought with the ratification of the covenant by Moses before Sinai; and as that was by propitiatory sacrifice, securing the forgiveness

[1] *Op. cit., ibid.*, p. 353 f.

of sins and then dedicating the redeemed people (Ex. xxiv. 5-8), so was this. Such are the fundamental features of the view of our theme given by the Synoptists. The Fourth Gospel adds definiteness and conclusiveness to their expressions. In that early discourse with Nicodemus in which our Lord emphasized the necessity of the new birth, and set forth belief in himself as the condition of eternal life, he pointed to his own death by "lifting up" as the ground of salvation. And the sixth of John, with its emphasis upon eating his flesh and drinking his blood, which phrases must call to mind the ancient form of sacrifice and the participation therein by the offerer at the sacrificial meal, confirms this interpretation.

Such was the view which Jesus had of his own death, but, of course, while he still lived, less emphasis could be laid upon it. Once crucified, the meaning of the crucifixion must become an object of careful consideration by the disciples who found it everywhere flung in their teeth as the great disgrace of their Master and the great stumbling block in the way of accepting his doctrines. Paul leads the way in this further consideration. To him the bloody death of Christ was a "propitiation". Libraries of discussion have accumulated about this word. Amid all the impossible and extravagant interpretations which have been given to it, the direct and natural one remains this, that something was thereby

done which rendered God inclined to pardon the sinner. The unfounded assumption that, if God was not thus inclined without the death of Christ, he must be malignantly disposed towards sinners, has caused every effort to be made to evacuate the word propitiation of this meaning. But they are not "exegetical". We might say of our interpretation, as Adam Smith said of the interpretation of the fifty-third of Isaiah: "There is no exegete but agrees to this." And the idea is abundantly reënforced in the context. Punishment is the proper treatment of the sinner, for it expresses the abhorrence that God, as a being of goodness and of holy character, feels towards sin. Not to punish is to seem indifferent towards sin, and this is to permit well-grounded attack upon character. Such is the Apostle's representation of a part, at least, of the reason of the propitiation. God is made inclined to forgive sinners by the sacrifice because his righteousness was exhibited by the infliction of the penalty of sin; but not because he needed to be inclined in heart to love the sinner or to exercise his mercy. In fact it was he himself who "set forth Jesus" as a propitiation.

With this apostolic view all the remaining New Testament agrees. Christ is made a "curse" for us, and made "sin", that is, a sin offering. His reconciliation precedes the cessation of our "enmity" (Ro. v. 10). In the Epistle to the Hebrews in particular the sacrificial, propitiatory

death of Christ is brought out in clearest light as the counterpart and fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifices as a whole. And John closes the presentation by calling Christ specifically our "propitiation".

In this hasty review of the biblical doctrine as to the work of Christ no effort has been made, of course, to be exhaustive, or to formulate a theory of the atonement which should satisfy the full meaning of the biblical passages cited. We have been looking for the answer to a comparatively simple question. Certain views of the death of Christ suggested by Christian experience have been brought before us—that he died to do a work for us which we are entirely incapable of doing for ourselves, that he thereby magnified the guilt of sin and maintained the honor of God and of his law, and that he thus laid the ground for the forgiveness of the sinner and for the peculiar peace which he feels in the contemplation of the work of Christ as done for him;—and our question has been whether these views, elementary and fundamental to the Christian life, as well as to developed Christian thinking, are in the line of universal experience, and first of that deposited in the Scriptures. Our examination has yielded at least this, that they are found in line with this earliest and normal experience. We may therefore pass immediately to the question whether they are found equally in line with the course of subsequent Christian thinking, and

whether they have for them the verdict of Christian history.

The earlier intellectual activity of the church was directed to other topics than the atoning work of Christ. It was not until late that any one appeared to give careful and specific attention to this doctrine and to set it in its place as one of the great themes of Christian study and chief topics of theology. But it is not difficult to decide what the general attitude of the earlier ages was upon the central element of the doctrine with which we have now to do. The conception that Christ did something for us which we could not do for ourselves, and that he laid in the sacrifice of Calvary the objective foundation of our forgiveness, is the undisputed premise from which all that can be styled thought or theory in this period goes forth. Some of these first "theories" border upon the ludicrous, as when the death of Christ is explained as a payment made to the devil, and when it is even added, as by Gregory of Nyssa, that God deceived the devil by giving him a being as a ransom for the sinner which he was not able to hold, on the principle, apparently, that all is fair in war. Athanasius alone of all the early fathers makes any adequate and dignified explanation of Christ's work. He says in substance: Death is the penalty threatened by God against sin. It must be inflicted, or God's truthfulness is not maintained. On the other hand, to inflict it upon

all sinners would be to destroy the race which God created to bestow his Word upon it. Repentance can only effect a change of mind: it cannot release the sinner from the penalty of the law against which he has sinned. Only the Logos, the absolute life, can do this. Accordingly, he assumes flesh, endures death, and thus suffers in the place of man the penalty of the law.[1]

These were the last clear words upon this theme till Anselm of Canterbury published his *Cur Deus Homo* (1098). The title of the work was not hastily chosen, but reflected the theological necessity of the time. Never yet had the various elements of the developing system—the doctrine of the two natures of Christ, of sin and grace, and the great fundamental doctrine of the trinity—been brought into a perfectly intelligible harmony by the proposal of some principle which should serve as their common explanation and their unifying bond. Anselm found this desideratum in the necessity of a satisfaction. His theory in few words was this: The honor of God was impaired by the sin of man, since this says that God is not God. To let such a thing stand unpunished would be to make the righteous and the unrighteous equal and to destroy the order of the universe, making God the God of disorder. This God can no more do than he can lie. Hence

[1] *Ἐπλήρου τὸ ὀφειλόμενον ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ.* Quoted by Thomasius, *op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 389.

sin must be punished. But man cannot suffer this due punishment, for that would destroy the race; and yet a man must suffer it, for man sinned. Some infinite being must suffer it, because guilt is infinite. Therefore the necessity of the God-man, the question propounded in the title of the tract thus receiving its answer.

The further development of the theory is of less importance to us than these fundamental thoughts, for it is dependent upon the current Catholic theology elaborated in the confessional. It defines satisfactions, and supererogatory works in terms neither scriptural nor in accord with spiritual Christianity. Anselm, like every other workman, had to employ the tools furnished by his age. But this fundamental Christian thought, which it was all his purpose to attempt to bring out, that there was a great objective necessity calling for the death of Christ as the condition of the forgiveness of sinners, was the legacy which he bequeathed to the awakening spirit which four centuries later introduced the scriptural period of Christian theology. He does not even clearly connect the death of Christ with the punishment of sin, since he makes it a supererogatory work voluntarily done, in consequence of which it is "fitting" that forgiveness should be bestowed upon sinners. But, unsuccessful as the theory is in these and many other respects, it served to hand down to later theologians the great idea of the objective atonement.

That subsequent age was not without suggestions of another kind which it could have adopted, had they seemed true. Abelard, in particular, was rich in suggestions, partly true and partly false, tending on the whole to replace the objective atonement by a subjective one. But the Reformers held fast to the Athanasian-Anselmic idea. The most instructive of them all is Calvin, who in his Institutes, in the last edition, set forth a more consistent form of the doctrine than can be found in any predecessor.

Calvin will never be understood if he be conceived as a scholastic, who adopted some leading principle of theology which he applied with reckless consistency to all the doctrines of the Christian system. He had, no doubt, his leading theological ideas, and he was a consistent thinker; but he was above all else a theologian of Scripture and experience, and his method was that of the interpreter, and hence *a posteriori* rather than *a priori*. Consequently in this doctrine he does not start with abstract views of God to deduce a doctrine of atonement. He is not seeking the "necessity" which Anselm thought he must attain. In fact, there is no abstract description of the attributes of God to be found anywhere in his treatise. He begins with the facts of the situation of which the most important and impressive to his thinking is the guilt and ruin of man. He thus begins where Christian experience as already analyzed in these lectures begins, and his

whole development of the theme is determined by this beginning. Thus, while the element of the moral influence of the death of Christ in awakening the sinner from his torpor and leading him to repentance, which Abelard had introduced, finds abundant place in his pages, as it must in the preaching of every evangelical minister, it receives no special consideration when Calvin is discussing the atonement. The holiness of God creates "a perpetual and irreconcilable opposition between righteousness and iniquity", so that "he cannot receive us entirely as long as we remain sinners". This is the permanent and fundamental ethical necessity. Hence the guilt of man must be in some way removed, and the Scriptures present Christ as "receiving and suffering in his own person the punishment which by the righteous judgment of God impended over all sinners". By this act, performed in his voluntary death, "he has expiated those crimes", and "by this expiation God the Father has been satisfied and duly atoned".[1] This is, in a nutshell, Calvin's theory of the atonement. He did not fail to guard his doctrine from possible misrepresentations and distortions. While God is "an enemy to men till by the death of Christ they are restored to his favor", "such modes of expression" he says, "are accommodated to our capacity", and we are not to obscure the real love of God for rebellious sinners, in whom "he

[1] "Institutes", II. xvi. 2, 3.

yet discovers something that his goodness may love. . . . By a pure and gratuitous love towards us he is excited to receive us into favor. . . . Therefore, to remove all occasion of enmity and to reconcile us completely to himself, he abolishes all our guilt by the expiation exhibited in the death of Christ."[1] And, finally, the ultimate ethical root of Calvin's whole doctrine is clear from the reference which he makes of the effectiveness of the expiation to the "obedience" of Christ by which "in its whole course" he rendered God favorable to us. "Indeed", says Calvin, "his voluntary submission is the principal circumstance even in his death";[2] which excludes forever the idea "that God was ever hostile to him, or angry with him".[3]

Thus Calvin is clearly upon the side of those who have seen in the death of Christ the performance in our behalf of something which we could not do for ourselves. But his exaltation of the law of God and of the idea of expiation, especially as sharpened by his successors, and connected with the justice of God as an eternal divine attribute, called forth from Socinus the statement of a contradictory doctrine which Socinus condensed in the form: "I think and hold to be the orthodox doctrine that Jesus Christ is our Saviour because he has announced to us the

[1] *Ibidem.*
[2] *Ibidem,* 5
[3] *Ibidem,* II.

way of eternal salvation, has confirmed it, and in his own person both by his example and by rising from the dead manifestly exhibited it, and because he will himself give to us who believe in him eternal life".[1] The "confirmation" is partly, but only partly, by the death of Christ, which thus receives no importance or adequate explanation in Socinianism. In this doctrine, as in his whole system, Socinus proceeded from totally different principles from those adopted by Calvin and the generality of Protestants. The sharp discussion which ensued had the advantage, like that of the Nicæan period, of considering all the main arguments bearing upon the theme. Socinus denies the necessity of satisfaction to forgiveness; affirms its impossibility, if sins are to be forgiven; denies its actuality; emphasizes the impossibility of a transfer of punishment, and especially that of our punishment for sin, which is eternal death; denies the bearing of the dignity of Christ's person upon the value of his sufferings; affirms the impossibility of vicarious obedience to the law; and denies imputation whether of obedience or of guilt, as an impossibility. The true view of the subject springs from correct conceptions of God's justice; and, punitive justice being an "effect of

[1] "*De Jesu Christo Servatore*", i. I. To be found in the *Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum*, vol. II., p. 115 ff. This topic is more fully discussed in Grotius' "Defence", English translation, Andover, 1889.

God's will", the question on which everything in the topic turns is, What is fitting for God to do? And, since God has promised to forgive repentant sinners, this is fitting, and therefore just. Thus, as he thinks, the foundation of Calvin's whole argument has been undermined.

This theory of Socinus, considered as a subjective theory of the atonement, is peculiarly bare, unspiritual, and unsatisfactory. It is really as formal and repellent as Socinus can have conceived the Calvinism of his own day to be. There is almost or quite no reference to the effect of the death of Christ upon the heart of the unbeliever leading him to repentance. The death is scarcely more than the necessary condition of the resurrection, which "confirms" and "exhibits" salvation. But it essentially covers the points of opposition to the view of Christ's death as propitiation, which have been repeated with more or less variation ever since. This controversy performed the service of bringing out one more discussion of the theme from a still different standpoint, when Grotius appeared with his reply to Socinus, in which he changed the presentation of the position of God in the matter of forgiveness from that found in both Calvinists and Socinians, by whom he was conceived as "the offended party", to that of Sovereign and Ruler. Grotius accordingly emphasizes the idea of law rather than that of justice, and made the sufferings of Christ a legal example and the occasion

of the relaxation of the law, and not the exact and strict penalty demanded by justice. But this view, however it may have been considered, and have served to assist in the clarification of the thinking of the times, met with no general reception, and left little trace of itself among those theologians who maintained the line of evangelical theological descent.

The crystallization of the theology of the Reformation upon the atonement may be sufficiently traced for our present purpose in the great creeds which began with its beginning at Augsburg (1530) and reached their completion at the close of the thirty years' war (1648) and of the reign of Charles I. in the Westminster Confession. It would be tedious to repeat here all the definitions of these creeds, so entirely accordant are they with the general result at which Calvin arrived. The Augsburg Confession taught that Christ suffered "that he might reconcile the Father unto us";[1] the Belgic, that he made "satisfaction" in our nature, and bore "the punishment of sin by his most bitter passion and death", "appeasing the wrath of God by offering himself upon the tree";[2] and the Westminster, which was prepared in the full light of all the previous discussions and is demonstrably the lineal descendant, through the Lambeth and Irish Articles, of

[1] See Schaff's "Creeds of Christendom", vol. III., p. 9.

[2] *Ibidem*, pp. 404, 405.

the original English Articles prepared in the year 1563, thus summing up the whole course of Protestant theology in general, and of English theology in particular,—the Westminster affirms that "the Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of Heaven for all those whom the Father hath given him".[1]

This, then, seems to be the verdict of history, if we pause in our review at Westminster, as to the great point of our contention, whether Christ does something for us preparing salvation, constituting its very possibility, which we could not do for ourselves. It is unmistakably for that contention. We need add but one further remark; but that is a necessary one, for we ought certainly to seek the clearest proof that the development of doctrine which has here been hastily sketched is a genuine development when judged according to the criteria already laid down. It is genuine; for it conforms to all those criteria. It (1) begins in Scripture teaching by our Lord and his apostles; it (2) has proceeded according to the laws of logical sequence, beginning like all the doctrines in a condition of substantial harmony upon the facts, without scientific formulation, coming to such formulation when the

[1] *Ibidem*, p. 621.

times demanded it, when the elements of Christian theology required it for their consistent expression, proceeding by full discussion, rejecting alien elements, and attaining general acceptance; it (3) agrees with other established Christian doctrines, especially with the doctrine of incarnation unto redemption, and with our ethical necessities, as well as the objective character of forgiveness; and (4) it, and it alone, accords with objective biblical exegesis.

I have restricted myself in this review to a consideration of the simple thesis which I have defined for two reasons, the first, that there is still some dispute among those who eagerly maintain the objective atonement as to the proper formulation of the theory of it, and the second, that the most recent forms of attack concern this main point rather than anything less central and fundamental. We are told in various forms that Christ has simply done before us what we have to do after him; that sacrifice is essential to all forms of soul saving; and that the sacrifice of Christ differs from others only as his own greatness and the greatness of his task as Saviour of Humanity differentiate him from them. The explanation, it is said, must be ethical and spiritual. There is no need of any "transactional basis" for forgiveness, or of anything spectacular: all must be spiritual and real; and this is the real element, that no one, not even Christ, can save a sinner without entering into his sin and bearing its con-

sequent pain himself. Now, when such a theory as this is propounded, it may be said, have you not a new outgrowth of Christian experience? Is there not here a spiritual development? And is not that objective feature of atonement as much a transient, and hence individual, special, abnormal element of the doctrine as is the ransom paid to the Devil, or any other outlived element, Anselm's supererogatory performance of Christ, for example, which had its origin in the customs and doctrine of the Roman Catholic confessional? Certainly, Christian experience ought to grow more spiritual with the progress of time, and this explanation, it is said, as more spiritual, has in it the marks of a Christian development.

Our theme prescribes for us the single line of reply marked out by the form into which these questions have fallen. Do the theories sketched bear the marks of a genuine product of the universal Christian experience? Our answer cannot long hesitate. They (1) do not begin in a recognizable germ in the recorded teachings of our Lord and his apostles. The course of our exegetical discussion excludes them at once. But (2) there is in them nothing of "conservation of the past", nothing of a recognition of the divine leading in the previous Christian history, nothing of a deeper and fuller interpretation of acknowledged facts of doctrine which are not to be surrendered. They are professedly a discarding of the "unspiritual", and actually a re-

jection of the established and Christian. Unless we are to say that Christianity is not of divine origin, and that it is therefore bound to no beginning in revelation but is simply like a bark floating upon the tide of general human progress, we cannot acknowledge this proposal as a legitimate outgrowth of experience. It departs too widely from the original, constitutive, and standard experience of the apostolic age.

But we may now say more. Refined Christian feeling may possibly object to the merely external and to the "spectacular" and "transactional", as it objects to merely external religious authority; and we are ready to grant any such contention which can be made. True, there might be so great a spiritualization as to pass beyond the limits of the reasonable, and to deny substantially that we are still spirits clothed in flesh and subject to material conditions. Christ did actually die and shed his literal blood. But such a spiritualization as this is surely not intended or in any degree a probable outcome of present discussions. So far as it has this real and substantial ground of objection, that the merely spectacular is inconceivable in a realm of so serious realities as those which pertain to salvation, it is to be answered by the direct reply that the atonement does not involve the merely spectacular. There is a spectacle "to angels and to men" in the death of Christ; but it is a spectacle involving the deepest spiritual realities. It may carry ob-

jectively still more; but it carries to experience by the direct path of the spiritual intuitions a vast burden of important truth. God need not be conceived of as commanding Christ to put himself upon the cross as a priest lays a victim on an altar, if this shocks the sensibilities of any (although it is the biblical representation, and did not shock the apostles), but the crucifixion may be viewed as wholly the act of wicked men. And yet, if God has so made the world that the purest of all human beings, even the Son of God, could not be permitted to live here and depart hence without incurring hate and submitting to death, and that in its most cruel form, bearing upon guiltless shoulders the ignominy fit only for the most guilty, then the whole cosmic system bears inextricably involved in it the divine connection between sin and pain. The whole system then manifests God's eternal law and the majesty of his unchangeable determination to maintain the right; and this greatest and antecedently inconceivable involution of suffering declares it most of all, yes, unspeakably, infinitely. Hence as an objective fact, no sinner can doubt God's holiness or despise his law, as historically none ever has, when he looks upon Calvary. All this is the utterance of our moral intuitions and constitutes in itself an objective atonement, without the addition of further elements. But if there is and must be an objective element in the sufferings of Christ, why should it not be made promi-

nent, and why should not the spiritual here be clothed in tangible form as it is elsewhere? If government is of value, and if the divine government is a spiritual fact, why should not that government provide for the escape of the guilty by the imposition of their penalty on other, not unwilling, shoulders? The "spectacle" thereby created is no mere spectacle but one founded in the nature of God and man; of God, because he will not forget law and holiness and forgive without reference to his "righteousness"; of man, because he needs evidence of God's holiness in the expression of Calvary as much as he needs evidence of God's omnipotence in the forms of the world, or of his omniscience in the evolution of the world's inhabitants, or of his love in the teachings of Jesus. In no sphere do we learn about God except as he has revealed himself, or lifted the curtain upon the spectacle wrought by his activity. And if there is a divine law, objectively declared in the objective Bible, and accompanied by the threat of an objective penalty, death, why does not the divine veracity and the best good of men (for which the law was given) demand an objective exaction of that penalty?

We have repeatedly referred to Kaftan in preceding hours, generally by way of criticism. It is a pleasure to make our last reference to him in quite another way; for Kaftan comes vigorously to the defence of the principle for which I have

been contending in the foregoing paragraphs. His treatment will add confirmation from another point of view to the analysis of history and the dogmatic construction which have engaged us. After a review of the history of the doctrine of the atonement in which he has summarized its verdict as this, that there is call for a more eminently ethical discussion of the doctrine, he says[1] that the modern theologians have perceived this, "and they have returned in a decided majority to the old doctrine, generally laying aside the juridical form of the same, and seeking to give an ethical character to its leading thoughts, and thus deepen it. . . . Not the juridical idea of punishment, they say, but the ethical idea of propitiation (*Sühne*) is to be made the basis. On the contrary, the highest ethical idea of propitiation is just that of punishment. Take this away, and propitiation becomes nothing but the [inferior and unworthy] idea of an appeasing of the wrath of an incensed deity. Precisely the idea of the vicarious suffering of punishment is the idea which must in some way be brought to a full expression for the sake of the ethical consciousness. Only it must not remain the leading thought. Above it must be placed the thought that justification and reconciliation are a divine act directed towards the believer, which is taken up and constituted an ethically conditioned experience of the believer by the faith that lays

[1] "*Dogmatik*", p. 491 ff.

hold of the death of Christ as the act of revelation by which God establishes the new covenant. . . . What is given us in Christ, specially in his death and resurrection, forms not simply the objective presupposition of salvation, but it is itself the divine saving act of regeneration and justification, which becomes effective in every case in which the word of Christ awakens faith."

So much for Kaftan's criticism of current ways of restating the doctrine of the atonement. He approaches his own treatment of the subject through the topic of justification. This is a "forensic act", a declaration as to the sinner,—simply and best stated, his forgiveness. But it is "the death of the Saviour which first gives unambiguous expression to the purpose of his mission. . . . The paternal forgiveness of God is to be sharply distinguished from a mere overlooking which lets sin go. On the contrary, it permits no doubt to arise that sin is sin, it convinces the sinner of the whole weight and depth of his guilt, and yet receives him with gentle mercy into the peace of his Father's house and re-establishes the interrupted communion. It judges sin while it forgives the sinner. Thus genuine forgiveness is a high, if not the highest, revelation of moral dignity (*Würde*). It unites the judge's punishing severity with the love which seeks the good of the other. Therefore it only takes place when an unmistakable expression is given to the moral dignity of the for-

giving God." Not merely is this so, but "the conscience, awakened by God, can accept no forgiveness which is not experienced as at the same time a condemnation of sin. Otherwise it would feel doubt of the divine origin of the forgiveness, and so of its worth. . . . Sin and law are correlate conceptions, that is, the moral consciousness of the sinner is necessarily controlled by the idea of law. . . The law and its curse were in fact truth, and would have had the last word, if it had not pleased God to have mercy on men through Jesus Christ. That is, without this the result for men would have been the deserved penalty of condemnation. But God has had mercy upon man and sent his Son. And Jesus, though he was without sin and deserved no punishment, took upon himself all the evils which have come into the world as the consequence and punishment of sin, even to the shameful death on the cross by the hand of sinners. He did this because he could in no other way fulfil his calling and carry into effect the counsels of the divine mercy. Consequently, for the good of man, he bore all that which man had deserved, and thereby has man escaped the final, eternal punishment and become a child of God. All this is comprised by the church in that single expression taken from the words of the ancient prophet, 'The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed'." And he adds: "That is not merely a

subjective conclusion upon the related facts, but it is as objective and real as anything which faith recognizes and knows."

Thus we pause in our theme. The objective work of Christ in the blood of the cross as the foundation of the subjective work of salvation, this is the result of experience confirmed by Scripture and Christian history. We have been in the atmosphere of discussion, as about the literal cross on which Jesus died there were gathered the Roman soldiers, whose clanging armor and brutal ignorance and indifference and greed for spoil, disturbed the soul and added confusion to grief. But in the greatness and solemnity of the spectacle a solemn stillness finally settled upon the scene, till the Centurion himself exclaimed: "Truly, this was the Son of God"; and as we linger there in thought, and now as we go away, we may take upon our lips the words of Montgomery and sing:

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice,
I must remember Thee.

Remember Thee and all thy pains,
And all thy love to me;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains,
Will I remember Thee.

And when these failing lips grow dim,
And mind and memory flee,
When Thou shalt in thy kingdom come,
Jesus, remember me.

LECTURE VI

THE CHURCH

We have now arrived at the last lecture of this brief course. The limits set by the passage of time forbid us to enter upon a large number of topics upon which something of interest, and perhaps of importance, might be said. But we may console ourselves with the reflection that the great leading and determinative doctrines of the evangelical system have been reviewed, and that as a system—a whole of self-consistent thought—the voice of experience has been found to speak for it. Besides, the utterances of Christian experience are not so rich in the remaining portions of the system as in those which have been reviewed. In respect to the theory of the atonement, for example, a topic which we have discussed only in its most general form, in the mere aspect of a work objectively done by Christ as the foundation of the sinner's salvation,—experience would have much less to say. True, the evidence of Christian history has a bearing, and the products of the general reflection of the whole church can be gathered up; but evidently, distinctions which divide theologies, as do those

between "distributive" justice and "general" justice, do not enter into consciousness strictly so styled. Advocates of the various forms of the so-called moral theory may indeed rightly cite experience for the fact that the cross of Christ is the place of the most powerful exhibition of the infinite love of God—the most moving of all the influences that tend to bring men into harmony with him by breaking down the opposition of their hard hearts. The atonement has this effect, which is undoubtedly a designed effect; but that this is its sole effect, or even its chief effect, experience could never declare. At its utmost it could only say that it knew of no other; and this is just what it does not say. As to the divine agency in regeneration experience is equally silent. Consciousness embraces the motives that operate upon the will, and follows the path of inference traced in another lecture to the conclusion that their source is the personal action of God. But here consciousness stops. How those motives are presented, and whether any such "change in the very substance of the soul" occurs as theologians have taught, it cannot say. So, again, the objective divine act of justification, apart from the subjective experience of forgiveness, does not enter consciousness. The doctrine of future awards of eternal blessedness and punishment has, no doubt, a basis in immediate experience, for guilt and self-condemnation are parts of such experience; but the nature of those

awards, and even their eternity, however reasonable, capable of adjustment to the remaining portions of the system, and sustained by the larger experience of the church as embodied in standard treatises and creeds, can never derive illustration or confirmation from the immediate experience of Christians who are all still actually confined by the limitations of space and time.

We pass these topics by, then, with the less reluctance. There remains one great department of the system, where experience has much to say, still untouched by all our discussion, but of the most vital importance, the topic of sanctification. It is a topic of frequent debate in our own time, into many interesting forms of which it would be both pleasurable and profitable to enter. If something could be done in the way of dissecting the supposed experiences of perfect sanctification believed by many pious and earnest, but misguided souls to be granted unto them, and of exhibiting plainly the delusion involved therein, a real service to religion would be rendered. Perhaps this may be attempted at another time and place. At present the discussion must be limited to one topic, also of the greatest current interest, which embraces in its implications the most important elements of the subject of sanctification, viz., the Church. The Anglo-saxon peoples, with their pre-eminently practical characteristics, have always laid great emphasis upon questions of polity. But to-day the exigencies of life in our own

country have attracted fresh attention to the theme, and nothing can be said to be of greater living interest than questions as to the unity of the church, its basis, and its methods. The most notable overture made by any of the great historic churches on this theme is that made by the Protestant Episcopal. It contains, as one of the essentials to effective Christian unity, the acceptance of the "historic episcopate", and this in the sense, as has finally been made clear, that the episcopate regularly derived from the Apostles, is essential to the being of the church. The first question, then, to be settled before Christian unity is attained or attainable, is the question, What is the church? And upon that question Christian experience has a word to say.

Sanctification has a divine and a human side. As a mere human experience it is a matter of immediate consciousness because it is a matter of choice, sanctification being the exercise of holy choice and progressive sanctification being the intensification of such choice and the multiplication of individual choices of the right till they become, in the final consummation, uninterrupted. Thus all through the process the Christian is conscious of what is going on within him, or he may be. I say "may be", for it is a fact that the best Christian growth, that is, the best experience of sanctification, is often practically unconscious, because it is attained by the active doing of duty, by which the Christian is absorbed

not in himself as doing it, but in the duty to which he has given himself. Too great introspection is fatal to the best living. Thus there may come great stretches of the Christian's life when, in fact, his power of resistance to evil is constantly developing and his capacity and love of service are constantly enlarging; but he may not know it, just as one is often so happy that he does not know he is happy at all. But if the issue is raised by any fact or event, if the Christian asks himself whether he is maintaining a holy choice, then, of course, the answer must be immediate and certain. In a mind capable of any considerable self-examination, to experience sanctification and to know it are inseparable facts.

It were easy to prove that the Holy Spirit is the agent of sanctification. The argument is the same as that already traced for the existence of God from the experience of the new birth. In fact, it is in the performance of the sanctifying work that God makes himself known. But we are not now obliged to retrace this proof or to insist upon it. It is a plain doctrine of the Scriptures, whose authority has been already established by our argument, that the Holy Spirit is the agent of sanctification, and we may accept it without further inquiry. We draw, however, this important inference, that, since holy choice is itself a matter of immediate certainty and is elicited by the Holy Spirit, any man or any group

of men may certainly know, by the same direct and indubitable inference as in the case of regeneration, that they are the recipients of God's sanctifying grace, if this is so. The experience of sanctification is a proof of the presence of the Spirit.

Now, out of the experience of sanctification comes the existence of the Christian church; and, therefore, wherever there is sanctification, there is the church in essence, if not in reality. Nothing but the fact of sanctification is requisite to prove the full Christian character of any church in which it is found. This is our contention; and it is so important that the most careful justification of it is imperatively demanded.

It is significant that the first time the church of Christ is spoken of in the New Testament (Matt. xvi. 18: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church"), it is spoken of as something well understood. We are therefore either to suppose that Christ had previously established it in some discourse not handed down to us, or, as is more probable, that it was thought too obvious to need explanation that his followers, like Israel at large, or the smaller Jewish communities who gathered in their synagogues, would have their "congregation" (Heb. קָהָל). It was in the nature of the case certain. The Jews gathered in synagogues because they were interested in the same great truths and duties, and needed confirmation in the way of holiness.

They gathered because souls interested in the same things always gather together. Even more powerful was the tendency among Christians because Christianity is a religion of love, and men who love holiness must love all who share this love. Love of neighbor flows directly out of love of God and no man can have the latter who does not also have the former. Hence Christianity is a religion of association; or, in modern parlance, a social religion. To be a Christian and not care for other Christians is impossible because such indifference is the denial of the very constitutive element of Christianity, love; it is the destruction of holy choice, the death of sanctification. Sanctification therefore leads necessarily to the church.

On the other hand, the church is the sphere within which sanctification is carried on by the divine Spirit. Jesus did not contemplate any other sanctification. It was by the church, the group of apostles that had been companying together in Jerusalem, that the word was preached at Pentecost which resulted in the conversion of the first great multitude brought to Christ after his ascension, and they were all baptized and "added" to the church. There is no record of conversions in the New Testament but in the same way and with the same result. And when gifts of the Spirit are spoken of and the evidences of sanctification in works of beneficence are re-

counted, it is always within the same circle of the witnessing church.

The whole New Testament view upon this subject is, then, this, that, given holy processes, that is, sanctification, in human souls, these will at once naturally unite in Christian society, and that such a society is a church; and again, that, given a church, the Holy Spirit will work through it producing sanctification, so that sanctification is the proof of his presence and the proof of the existence of the church. We cannot better phrase our doctrine than in the words of Irenaeus,—though we need not defend his entire consistency,—"Where the church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the church." To this authority "Catholics" of every name cannot object. We therefore say with large degree of confidence that the true doctrine of the church must be formulated in accordance with this canon.

So entirely foreign to the earliest period of the church was the developed ecclesiasticism of Rome that when the "teaching of the Twelve Apostles" was written, in the year 100 A. D., or thereabouts, there were many churches existing without bishops or deacons, gathered apparently by travelling evangelists and never provided with officers,—often, no doubt, gathering themselves by the natural attraction of Christian faith. They were "churches", for they had the Spirit; but

they were not organized as they needed to be. That had to come later. But by the year 1517, when the Reformation was introduced by Luther, all this early simplicity had long since passed away. The church, as men then viewed it, comprised the following essential particulars. It was the ark of salvation, outside of which salvation is impossible; the possessor of the sacraments, which can only be administered by it, and which are the indispensable channels of grace; essentially composed of the clergy; its existence secured by the hierarchy instituted by the Apostles, which culminates in the Pope. Everything depends upon connection with the papacy, both the right organization and validity of the church and the salvation of the individual.

Here is the most radical change that can be conceived. The idea of the church has been inverted. What was once primarily the fellowship of believers, and only secondarily the institution established to bestow salvation upon men, has now become primarily the repository of all the gifts of grace, and is in no essential sense at all the fellowship of believers. Men are always in the process of salvation, never saved, to the Roman church. And the proof of the Spirit's presence is no longer sanctification, but the "miracle of the altar", which itself needs other miracles to confirm it.

Now at this point the polemics of both communions will lock horns and fight the fight out

to the death. But meantime the student of Christian experience may find a better way of ascertaining the truth. He may first point out the evident fact that historically this radical change, slowly proceeding through the centuries, bears the most certain tokens of being a "degeneration" rather than an example of true development. The hierarchy was not an institution of the apostolic age, but archbishops, patriarchs, and the papal claims of the bishop of Rome all arise at definite periods and mostly at distinctly assignable dates. And no trace of the underlying idea of the hierarchy, that of the necessity of a priesthood and of the existence in the church of a true sacrifice, the mass, can be found in the New Testament or in the earliest antiquity. So much for external matters. But that great internal matter, the reversal of the point of emphasis in the church from a fellowship of saved men to a contrivance to save them, that may also be shown to be a "degeneration",—a change by the most gradual steps, but by an increasing departure from most of the ideas of the church associated with the great primitive thought,—that men gained salvation directly from God who wrought when and where he would (Jn. iii. 8).

The school of Ritschl, which we have so often had occasion to criticize severely, has rendered at this point a great service to the church. In his "History of Dogma", Harnack has drawn out the steps of the earliest departures from original

conceptions of the church in a masterly manner. As he will not be suspected of any special sympathy with the fundamental ideas of the present lectures, his testimony is the more noteworthy. I make free quotations from his pages in the following paragraphs.

"The confessors of the gospel [in the earliest period] belonged to organized communities which stood to each other in an outwardly loose but inwardly firm connection, and every community, by the vigor of its faith, the certainty of its hope, the holy character of its life, as well as by unfeigned love, unity, and peace, was to be an image of the holy church which is in heaven and whose members are scattered over the earth. They were further, by the purity of their walk, and an active brotherly disposition, to prove to those without, that is, to the world, the excellence and the truth of the Christian faith. . . . The church, that is, the totality of all believers destined to be received into the kingdom of God, is the holy church because it is brought together and preserved by the Holy Spirit. It is the one church not because it presents this unity outwardly,—on earth the members are, rather, scattered abroad,—but because it will be brought to unity in the kingdom of Christ, because it is ruled by the same spirit and inwardly united in a common relation to a common hope and ideal. The church, considered in its origin, is the number of those chosen by God, the true Israel,—

nay, still more, the final purpose of God, for the world was created for its sake.[1] . . . The essential character of Christendom in its first period was a new holy life and a sure hope, both based upon repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ and brought about by the Holy Spirit. Christ and the church, that is, the Holy Spirit and the holy church, were inseparably connected. The church, or in other words, the community of all believers, attains her unity through the Holy Spirit. This unity manifested itself in brotherly love and in the common relation to a common ideal and a common hope. The assembly of all Christians is realized in the kingdom of God, viz., in heaven; on earth Christians and the church are dispersed and in a foreign land. Hence, properly speaking, the church herself is a heavenly community, inseparable from the heavenly Christ. Christians believe that they belong to a real super-terrestrial commonwealth, which from its very nature cannot be realized upon earth. The heavenly goal is not yet separated from the idea of the church; there is a holy church on earth in so far as heaven is her destination. Every individual congregation is to be an image of the heavenly church. Reflections were no doubt made on the contrast between the empirical community and the heavenly church whose likeness it was to be; but these did not affect the theory of the subject. Only the saints of God

[1] *Op. cit.*, English translation, I., 150-152.

whose salvation is certain belong to her, for the essential thing was not to be called, but to be, a Christian. There was as yet no empirical universal church possessing an outward legal title that could, so to speak, be detached from the personal Christianity of the individual Christian."[1]

This, according to Harnack, was the original condition of the church. But it came out into a world of strife and soon received the most threatening attacks itself. Its method of answering them was the necessary outcome of its position, but it brought about insensibly a change whereby the original idea of the church was revolutionized. For example, the contest with Gnosticism involved an appeal to the New Testament, the canon of which was quite generally settled by this time; but here the church was at a serious disadvantage. The arguments of the Gnostics were quite as good as those of the church leaders, because the exegesis of the church was settled upon no sound foundations; and you cannot combat one allegory by another, since both may be true or both false. Hence the church writers had to appeal to tradition as preserved in the church, and thus to lay an emphasis upon the great seats of tradition, on Alexandria, Corinth, and especially Rome, which gave a new cast to the theory of the church. The merely historical argument proved to be insufficient; hence a

[1] *Ibid.*, II. 72.

change in the dogmatic idea. This new "idea was that the Elders, *i. e.*, the Bishops, had received 'with the succession of the episcopacy a certain gift of truth', that is, their office conferred on them the apostolic heritage of truth [a rudimentary infallibility] which was therefore objectively attached to the dignity, as a charism. This notion of the transmissibility of the charism of truth became associated with the episcopal office after it had become a monarchical one, exercising authority over the church in all relations, and after the bishops had proved themselves the strongest supports of the communities against the attacks of the secular power and of heresy. In Irenaeus and Tertullian, however, we only find the first traces of this new theory. The old notion which regarded the churches as possessing the heritage in so far as they possess the Holy Spirit, continued to exercise a powerful influence on these writers, who still united the new dogmatic view with an historical one, at least in controversies with the heretics. . . . Cyprian found the theory already in existence, but was the first to develop it and to eradicate every remnant of the historical argument in its favor. The conception of the church was thereby subjected to a further transformation which completed the radical changes that had been gradually taking place from last half of the second century. . . . It was taught that Christ received from God a law of faith, which as a new

lawgiver he imparted to the apostles, and that they, by transmitting the truth of which they were depositaries, founded the one Catholic church. The latter, being guardian of the apostolic heritage, has the assurance of possessing the Spirit; whereas all other communities than herself, inasmuch as they have not received that deposit, necessarily lack the Spirit and are therefore separated from Christ and salvation. Hence one must be a member of this church in order to be a partaker of salvation, because in her alone one can find the creed which must be recognized as a condition of salvation. Consequently in proportion as the creed became a doctrine of faith, the Catholic church interposed herself as an empiric power between the individual and salvation. She became a condition of salvation; but the result was that she ceased to be a sure communion of the saved and of saints."[1]

We need not pursue the historical discussion further. While on the one hand it is not necessary to say that the developing tendency towards the strong external monarchy of the papal church was in every respect unfortunate and evil, yet nothing can be more certain or more capable of objective historical proof than the position that the process was at bottom a corruption of the idea of the church or that the demand of the papacy that "every creature should be subject to the Roman Pontiff as a condition of salvation" was

[1] *Ibid.*, II. 89 ff.

absolutely without foundation in the will of God. It was right to seek to establish the church more firmly by organization; right also to maintain that the gifts of God to men are ordinarily through the church; but wrong to say that the Spirit was bound to institutions which are often themselves of doubtful Christian character, the sacraments as administered, the papacy as established; and a hundredfold wrong, aye, something akin to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, to refuse to acknowledge the work of the Spirit seen in the holy lives of some of those who were "schismatics" in the Roman sense, but in no sense unbelievers or separated from the true body of Christ!

It is not a matter of much serious question whether the confirmation of Christian experience can be obtained for this Roman development. Doubtless Catholics have often associated their highest religious experiences with the peculiar dogmas and observances of their church. Thus Cardinal Newman has an eloquent passage upon the adoration of the host in the course of daily mass. But in such utterances the polemic and the apologist come too evidently to the front. If those great books of Catholic piety which have been acceptable to Christians of every age and which may therefore be said to reflect the universal Christian experience be carefully examined, it will be found, I think, that they are totally independent of the Romanizing dogmatic

views which as a fact their authors believed. Take, for example, Augustine, a great father of the universal church, as an ecclesiastic the forerunner of Catholicism, and as a theologian of Protestantism; you will not find him speaking in a Roman sense in his greatest works. As I write, the Pelagian treatises lie open before me. I do not find, as I turn their pages, upon which certainly the deepest convictions and profoundest experiences of Augustine are recorded, nor can I recall from previous prolonged study, a single passage in which distinctly Roman elements contribute to his views of doctrine or life in any very special sense. The same is true of his Confessions, which might have been written, for the most part, by any repentant sinner of the Protestant nineteenth century. Bernard of Clairvaux, Abbot and mystic, was a favorite author of Calvin's; but it was surely not a truly Romanized piety which endeared him to the great founder of French and Anglo-Saxon Protestantism. A careful perusal of the recently issued Life of Cardinal Manning will leave the reader in considerable doubt whether this great defender of the authority and even the infallibility of the papacy was much touched in his personal religious life by the peculiarities of Romanism. The thing which has made the religious experience of the great leaders and of the common mass of Catholicism has been, after all, the direct work of the Spirit in the soul. In fact, it is because of the

presence of the Spirit, who has not utterly forsaken Catholicism, that the church is to them the church; and their experience, rightly interpreted, speaks for nothing more.

What we have thus endeavored to show is that originally believers composed the church; that, wherever believers were gathered together in organized fellowship, there was the church; and that, accordingly, the sufficient evidence of the church was and is found in the experience of sanctification on the part of those who composed it. And we have sought, very briefly, to indicate that this continued to be true in spite of the fact that the organization of the church moved on other lines so as finally to identify the church with the external institution of the hierarchy.

The Reformation was a time of revolution in the conception of the church. This was, indeed, its chief outward token, proceeding from its chief inward characteristic, that it was profoundly a spiritual movement. Luther found peace with God not only apart from the machinery of the church, but after he had faithfully tried that machinery over long stretches of weary time and found it to fail. Still he might not have realized what this meant for the doctrine of the church had he not been violently excommunicated. Then both he and his followers, if they were to have any church life at all, must find it in some other organization. So he came soon to see. In 1520

he wrote: "Let him who will not err hold fast to this, that the Christian church [*Christenheit*] is a spiritual assembly of souls in one faith, and that no one is to be regarded as a Christian on account of his body [that is, his visible connection with a visible church]; so that he may know that the natural, proper, right, essential church [*Christenheit*] consists in the Spirit and in no external thing, whatever it may be called." . . . "The church of Jesus Christ is not seen but believed," that is, cannot be entirely lacking wherever the word of God is preached. "Wherever thou seest and hearest the preaching of the gospel, and from whatever person, doubt not that the church is there."[1]

This was the position taken ten years later when the Augsburg Confession came to be written. The church was the inward, invisible "communion of saints"; or, as the Apology defined, "the society of faith and of the Holy Spirit in hearts". But the church has its visible form, and this is to be distinguished by going back again in thought to the spiritual essence. It is produced by the "word of God"; and hence wherever "the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly administered", that is, administered "according to the gospel", there is the church, nothing more being necessary to the

[1] Quoted by Thomasius, "*Dogmengeschichte*", II., 201, from "*Vom Papstthum zu Rom.*"

"true unity of the church".[1] Zwingli held the same view with more emphasis on the "word" and less upon the "sacraments". "Wherever", says Calvin,[2] "the word of God is purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there is undoubtedly a church of Christ." As Luther had meant by the phrase "rightly taught" and by the "pure word" that which centered in Jesus Christ, held him up as Saviour, and was operative in souls through his divine power,[3] so Calvin did not mean by "pure preaching" perfect preaching, but that which embraced the great doctrines of the gospel and was essentially correct. The proof of the preaching, and so ultimately of the genuineness of the church, was the work of conversion and sanctification actually performed.

With this result all the Reformers and all the Reformation creeds are in an agreement which seems to me nothing less than wonderful. The First Helvetic Confession reads: "Of the living stones which are built upon this living rock is one holy general church built, the communion and assembly of all saints. . . . and it is assembled through the word of God."[4] The Heidel-

[1] Schaff, "Creeds", vol. III., p. 12.

[2] Institutes, IV., i, 9.

[3] Well put by Harnack, "*Dogmengeschichte*" (German), III., p. 705.

[4] Schaff, "Creeds", vol. III., p. 218 f.

berg Catechism reads: "Out of the whole human race . . . the Son of God by his Spirit and word gathers, defends, and preserves for himself unto everlasting life, a chosen communion in the unity of the true faith."[1] More distinct and clear yet is the French Confession, originally prepared by Calvin: "The true church . . . is the company of the faithful followers who agree to follow his word and the pure religion it teaches; who grow in grace all their lives, believing and becoming more confirmed in the fear of God."[2] Thus the church is the sphere of sanctification. The English Articles from 1563, through 1571, and in their American form, 1801, read: "The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."[3] And Westminister: "Particular churches which are members of the catholic, visible church of Christ, are more or less pure according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them."[4]

This uniformity of confession came out of uni-

[1] *Ibidem*, p. 324.
[2] *Ibidem*, p. 375.
[3] *Ibidem*, p. 499.
[4] *Ibidem*, p. 658.

formity of experience in the Protestant churches. When the reformation of the church had been set in motion in Wittenberg during Luther's year in the Wartburg, it was found that the spiritual experiences which belong to the church were not only still enjoyed but even greatly intensified under the new order. Prayer was a greater reality. Approach to God was rendered easier and communion with him more intimate when it was separated from the ceremonies of the old church. The Lord's Supper, administered without the mass, and under both kinds, was made a new office and the channel of more abundant grace. Luther himself neither could nor would turn back the evangelical tide. There was a new, great, deep, religious life in the University and city. The holy church was certainly still surviving because its holy fruits were found on every side. Such is the testimony of the men of Wittenberg. But we are not confined to their testimony. Objective facts remain accessible to us to testify to the presence there in those days of the Spirit of God. The faithful translation of the Scriptures, which was so eagerly welcomed, testifies of the spiritual life of the times. People do not thus produce nor welcome what they do not love; and to love the Scriptures is to "abide in Christ's word". The multiplication of Christian schools in humble parishes throughout the land, so that no village was to be so remote from the great centers of influence as to be deprived of the light

of learning and of the word of the gospel, was a Christian work. Not less the founding of the universities, which has gone on down to our day, where truth and truth alone has been sought, and where Christian truth has received, with all the actual drawbacks, its best defence and greatest extension. The great increase of practical beneficence is another objective proof of the presence of the Spirit in these churches. Luther denied the special sacredness of the monastic life and made the "calling" of the Christian to lie in his common daily work, in which by the exercise of the Christian virtues, by honesty and kindness and faithfulness, he was to glorify God. The immediate result was not only the diminution of false "good works", pilgrimages and self-mortifications, but the increase of the positive virtues. Feuds ceased. Oppression of the poor by the rich ceased. General prosperity followed in the wake of better ideas of industry and common labor. Everything began to tend upwards. The Dutch were inspired to begin and maintain their eighty years' war with Spain for liberty and religion, and the first and severest blow was given to that cruel world-wide empire, of the like of which it has at length died. Explorations took new life, and where commerce went the church went, or else the church went and commerce followed, till new nation after new nation had been formed, some of them to burst all the remaining bonds of tyranny and to stand forth at last pre-

eminently free and Christian in a new and unimagined degree. The books of those early Protestants may now be read, and they speak the Spirit of Christ. "If there be any fellowship of the Spirit" between the Christian ages, and if to-day there is any Christian spirituality among Christian men by profession, then those early writers were Christians and had the Spirit, for his marks are to be found in their words. And, if anything more is needed to close and confirm this long recital of accumulating proofs, let one be added to which Rome has always attached the greatest importance, the testimony of martyrs who shed their blood willingly for the faith of Jesus. Like Blandina, and Perpetua and Felicitas of the early church, so many a maiden, and like Ignatius and Cyprian many a bishop, laid down their lives with joy and with the name of Jesus upon their lips. True, Rome slew them herself; but that fact neither unsays their triumphant confession of faith in Jesus in the hour of death, nor makes them heretics. It rather shows that "holy" Rome, like pagan Rome, has been "drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."

The exclusive claims of Rome to be the true church are thus exploded by the force of experience. She has no monopoly of the Spirit and thus no monopoly of the church; for it is incredible that God should bless Protestant churches with his favor, as he has, if in his purpose and by

his holy law they are so astray from the right way as the theories of Rome teach. But every form of the doctrine of "apostolical succession", limiting the valid church to that episcopally organized and possessing the "succession", is equally exploded by experience. This further step of argument we must take before we have answered fully the question set before us by the proposal of the Lambeth conditions of Christian union. The English church, with its American daughter, is the chief representative of this theory. We shall hence discuss it with sole reference to her.

Among the creeds already quoted for the universal Reformation view of the church are included the English Articles. Although "Archbishops and Bishops" are mentioned in them, and reference is made to the forms of consecration found in the prayer-book, there is nothing in either articles or book to teach anything more than the doctrine held in the English church by multitudes since the Reformation, that the episcopacy is essential to the well-being, not the being, of the Church. However much the general tone of the church may have favored the exclusive theory of apostolical succession, her official doctrine has never gone further than this. The general recognition of the validity of the non-episcopal orders of the continental churches in England for a long period confirms the statement here made as to the doctrine of the church. The Anglican leaders could not deny that the churches

of the continent organized congregationally or in the presbyterian mode had the Spirit, and so were true churches of Jesus Christ.

These are matters of history and so of interest. But granting the claims of some high-church leaders of the present day, and admitting that the Church of England has always declined to recognize the validity of the orders of the non-episcopally organized churches, we maintain that this position is wrong, and we urge our objection by arguments drawn from the history of the same English Church. If anyone will read the history of English Puritanism in the time of Elizabeth and her immediate successors as it is sketched by John Richard Green, for example, he will find what sort of a religious life developed in the most anti-prelatical atmosphere which England ever knew. The new knowledge of the Bible which the people then gained developed the religious spirit among both high and low. Religion, Calvinism, and Puritanism all grew together. Parliament would not transact business upon Sunday; ceremonies were abolished till divine service was performed with the greatest simplicity; and interest in theology and religion dominated even the literary life of the people. But best were the fruits of this movement in the department of personal character. "The meanest peasant", says Green, "felt himself ennobled as a child of God. The proudest noble recognized a spiritual equality in the poorest 'saints'. The great social revolu-

tion of the civil wars and the Protectorate was already felt in the demeanor of English gentlemen. 'He had a loving and sweet courtesy to the poorest', we are told of one of them, 'and would often employ many spare hours with the commonest soldiers and the poorest laborers'. 'He never disdained the meanest nor flattered the greatest.'" Of a London housewife of the middle class it was said: "She was very loving and obedient to her parents, loving and kind to her husband, very tender hearted to her children, loving all that were godly, much misliking the wicked and profane. She was a pattern of sobriety unto many." "Home", says Green, "as we conceive it now, was the creation of the Puritan." Without the excesses of austerity into which persecution subsequently drove the Puritans, this early Puritanism gave every evidence of possessing the Spirit of God.

It was, however, still within the pale of the church. It had grown up under low-church bishops. And when, now, Laud appeared, with his fondness for greater ceremony and pomp, greater authority of the bishops, etc.,—for all those things, in short, in indissoluble connection with which the papal and the high-Anglican view of the church stands,—spiritual tendencies ought, on the prelatical theory, to have become even stronger. The notorious truth is that the spiritual elements of church and nation were driven into rebellion, and the outcome was the church of

the Revolution and the state of Cromwell. Who questions where the Spirit really was, with Laud, his ceremonies and his tyranny, or with the Puritans, who with all the unfortunate growth of their hard austerity, were still capable of such a government in the state as Cromwell's is now well understood to have been, and of such leaders as Bunyan and Baxter among pastors and of the Westminster divines among theologians? It is too well known to demand proof that the great interest of these excommunicated and abhorred schismatics from a papalized church system was concentrated upon the "doctrines of grace", upon repentance and faith, and upon holy living. They were practical reformers of the most earnest type. It is Green's testimony that they set in motion public improvements for which England, which annulled them at the Restoration of the Stuarts, has had since to wait till our own day. They emphasized the deeper elements of a spiritual and practical theology. They put the proof of the Scriptures upon the basis of the "testimony of the Spirit" in the first chapter of their Confession, and they emphasized the possibility of "assurance" of salvation, and the "duty" of "attaining thereunto". They had the Spirit; and their church without bishops was a true church of Christ.

A hundred years later the full effect of the Restoration, by which the most earnest and pious of the Church of England had been driven from her

pale, was being sadly felt. The "succession" was with the church, but the life of the church was far from the standards of the Scriptures. The clergy were drunken, sport-loving, formal in their religion, unfaithful to their people, and largely tinctured with heresy in their doctrine. The great masses of the people were sunk in irreligion and immorality. But there arose in the bosom of the church itself a reformer, a travelling evangelist, who preached in every part of the kingdom, and brought great multitudes to conviction of sin and to earnest religious lives. The movement extended across the seas to our own continent and has now become world-wide and developed one of the most vigorous of existing religious communions. Although Wesley was a loyal son of the English church and sought to keep his societies fully within the pale of the establishment, they were in fact cast out, and eventually this leader, himself nothing but a common presbyter, was obliged to ordain "bishops" for the American societies. Thus Methodism has no "succession". But where was the Spirit of God in those early days? With the fox-hunting parson, who sometimes officiated in his hunting boots, and droned the service to empty pews? Or with the Methodist itinerant, consumed with a zeal for souls, and preaching to a multitude gathered upon the village common, of thieves and loose livers, who groaned under the burden of their sins and rose from their knees to be chaste and honest?

As to the effects of Methodism upon the English nation I quote again from Green. The effects the movement wrought show what it was. "The Methodists themselves," he says, "were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the church broke the lethargy of the clergy; and the 'evangelical' movement, which found representatives like Newton and Cecil within the establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. In Walpole's day the English clergy were the idlest and most lifeless in the world. In our own day no body of religious ministers surpass them in piety, in philanthropic energy, or in popular regard. In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm, which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Restoration. A new philanthropy reformed our prisons, infused clemency and wisdom into our penal laws, abolished the slave trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education." Truly in such a movement was present the Spirit of God.

Shortly before Wesley began preaching in England, Jonathan Edwards began his labors in Northampton, Massachusetts. Both were revival preachers; and it is believed that Edwards' "Narrative of Surprising Conversions" was one of the

determinative influences which led to Wesley's career. The evidences that Edwards had the Spirit, and that the community of unprelatical Congregationalists in which he stood was a true church of God is much the same as that furnished by the career of Wesley for the same proposition. Spiritual effects of spiritual preaching were abundant. "There were remarkable tokens of God's presence", says Edwards, "in almost every house. It was a time of joy in families on account of salvation being brought unto them; parents rejoicing over their children as new-born, and husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands. The goings of God were then seen in his sanctuary, God's day was a delight and his tabernacles were amiable." Multitudes were admitted to the membership of the church, a hundred at a time. The work spread to other communities till it pervaded New England, and spreading thence, finally reached every one of the thirteen colonies in greater or less measure. Or, if we prefer to seek our evidence of the presence of the sanctifying Spirit in more tangible things than exclusively religious exercises, the same effects in the department of good morals attended this work as had Wesley's. The license of behaviour among the young people of Northampton, amounting to licentiousness, was checked; and they became orderly and sober in their conduct. New England has always retained much of the Puritan spirit, but it had then suffered

some eclipse. It was revived. The impulse was given which was sufficient to carry that region of our country through the demoralizations of the War of the Revolution. And when, at the beginning of the present century, the revival broke out which brought to an end French infidelity in Yale College and prepared the New England churches for the Unitarian conflict in Massachusetts, it was a direct consequence of the earlier revival. Timothy Dwight, Nathaniel Emmons, and their co-laborers, were not only men of the spirit of Edwards, but had been trained in his school. Or, if we prefer to pass by every outer evidence and get the answer of our question from Edwards himself, his books remain; and who that reads can doubt his possession of the presence and blessing of the Spirit of God? He exalted God supremely,—even, indeed, sometimes to the effacement of man—he grounded the proof of the Scriptures in the experience of the soul illuminated by the Spirit; he introduced the work of revival by preaching the great spiritual doctrine of Protestantism, that of justification by faith; he exalted the love of God, but did not forget his justice; and he made the center of his preaching and teaching the person of Christ. This was the "pure preaching" of the Protestant fathers. If they understood the matter at all, the church at Northampton was a true church of Christ.

We hasten the argument to its conclusion. Is there evidence that the churches outside of the

"apostolical succession" have the Spirit of God to-day? Over against the Roman and Anglican "Catholicism" we set the great mass of Protestant churches of every name, and invite comparison. Have they the Scriptures? So have we. Have they labored in Christian missions for the conversion of the heathen? So have we. Have they developed a Christian literature? We more. Have they given themselves to the labors of practical philanthropy? We have labored more abundantly than they all. Have they sought to maintain a high standard of ministerial and private morality? Nowhere have they succeeded as well as where they have been provoked by sharp competition with us. "I speak as a fool", but I speak of the triumphs of the grace of God through human instrumentalities.

Take the simple matter of the Scriptures. The collateral studies for their better explanation, which are specially characteristic of our own time, geographical explorations, archæological investigations, the study of Assyriology and Egyptology, etc., etc., are matters of Protestant scholarship rather than Roman, and among the English more of the broad church than of the high. The "Catholic Dictionary" of Thomas Arnold says of Meyer that he is "perhaps the most eminent who has appeared in our time" among New Testament scholars. Granting all the scholarship of the English church and universities to the Catholic party,—and such an admission is far from

the fact—still it would remain that "schismatic" Germany leads the world of biblical scholarship.

One of the greatest marks of true spiritual life in our own day is the recently accomplished revision of the English translation of the Bible. The result has never been surpassed among biblical translations for consistency and accuracy. Upon it nearly all the great divisions of English and American Protestantism have had representation, and it has not become known to the public that the "non-conformists" fell any whit behind their "catholic" neighbors in zeal or in service.

Or, if we look at the work of missions, and select as our example that ancient nation just now coming out of the seclusion and darkness of centuries of heathenism into the civilization, and, we trust, the Christian faith of the European world, Japan, the facts speak no less emphatically for the presence of the divine Spirit with our simple and non-prelatical churches. I would say nothing to diminish the luster of that most remarkable fact, the survival of Roman Catholicism in Japan through centuries of oppression under complete isolation from other Christian countries. But it is undeniable that Protestant missions, since the opening of Japan to outside influences, have exhibited a vigor and made a degree of progress with which Romanism has nothing to be compared. And of Protestant missions, those prosecuted by Presbyterians and Congregationalists have proved most successful when tested by

the only test which admits of objective estimation, that of numbers. Or, if we may enter the subjective sphere, who that reads the life of Neesima can doubt that he was a holy man, moved by the most profound desire to bring his countrymen to Christ? John Paton in the New Hebrides, Williams and Ashmore in China, Moffat, Grout, and Livingstone in Africa, Rhea among the Nestorians, Dwight, Hamlin, Christie in Turkey, and unnumbered heroes elsewhere, have they not manifested the same spirit, the creation of the divine Spirit, as Bishops Patteson, Hannington, and Heber, with the Jesuit Xavier, and the thousands of priests and laymen of Catholicism in ancient and modern times? We can claim no monopoly of missionary zeal for the protesting churches; but if such zeal is a token of the Spirit among "Catholics", is it not also when found, as it undeniably is and in large measure, among those who have no episcopal ordination of any sort?

And what of the reverse? Does episcopal ordination everywhere and always convey the gift of the Spirit? I let Dr. John Watson answer, as he recently did in the following words:—

"I take this abject, this poor wretch of a Brazilian priest, one of the lowest types under a ministry of any kind that can be discovered—I take him, ignorant, dirty, evil-living, not intelligent enough either to believe or not believe, I take that creature and I say: Then that is a valid minister of Jesus Christ? Yes! Then I bring in John

Bunyan. What of him? Was he a minister of Jesus Christ? No; never properly ordained! Had he any right to administer a sacrament? None! Was the sacrament ineffective from his hand? Yes! Was he an intruder? Yes! Was he an impostor? Yes! Is there any hope for him? 'Uncovenanted mercies'!—I remember the sermons he preached, wherein he took sinners in his arms and literally carried them up to the mercy seat that they could not escape from the salvation of God. I remember his life in Bedford gaol and all that he suffered for the Lord. And I remember the book wherein he has opened up the deeps below and the heights above, and has made the way luminous for millions that they may enter into the kingdom of heaven. And when I hear that that creature is a minister of Christ and this great prophet is an impostor, then I go down upon my knees and implore God that from this debasing error and superstition he would be pleased to save us and our children after us."

That word "superstition" is Watson's; but I will not fail of my duty to take its full burden upon my own shoulders. What less does it deserve to be called?

Thus we have sought to establish our contention (1) that the church is the sphere of sanctification, so that "where the Spirit is, there is the church, and where the church is", the living, vital, true church, "there is the Spirit"; and (2)

that the non-episcopal churches of the Reformation abundantly possess the Spirit, and so are members of the true visible church of God on earth. To you I leave the decision whether I have interpreted the voice of experience correctly and whether it does thus speak for the contention.

And thus we have come to the limit of our discussions together of high and sacred themes. I hope the following main positions have been clearly established in the estimation of you all, whatever dissent any of you may have to enter as to minor matters and mere details. If these are secure, I shall have attained the purpose of my labors,—these viz.—

(1) Christian experience is capable of logical analysis and of rigorously scientific treatment. If it were a matter of mere fancy, a flow of mere feeling, transitory, vague, and shallow, or a series of prejudices and of empirical notions, it would possess no value for the purposes of a sober theology. But it is none of these. At bottom it is known by the immediate consciousness; and in all its grades it may be tested by appropriate processes by which a reliable and universally valid result may be obtained. Thus our theology is no "theology of the feelings" when that is understood as a jumble of sentimentalities; but, however much it may affect the feelings, a theology of realities and of reason.

(2) Thus analyzed, Christian experience speaks

for the system of evangelical doctrine believed in substance by all the great churches which base their theology upon the Bible. The view we have taken of this system has been confined to its determinative portions and has considered these only in their vital core; but we have developed from experience the Christian view of the sinful world, and the doctrines of God, of regeneration by God, of prevenient grace, of justification by faith, of the divinity of Christ and of the trinity, of the objective atonement, and finally of sanctification by the Spirit and of the church as the sphere of sanctification. If any man believes those doctrines, he is an evangelical Christian. When he has brought them into orderly and perfect adjustment to one another and to all other known truth, he has gained a perfect theology, that theology towards which we all with unequal steps are hastening as we can.

Our age has thus already performed a certain work in the investigation and interpretation of Christian experience. The elements of the subject have been sufficiently set forth. But there remains still a great work in carrying the subject out into its details, for coming generations of laborers to perform, and among them for you, young men, who hear me to-day. Two great questions, demanding different qualifications in the student need to be investigated upon the largest scale.

(1) What particular doctrines are in fact asso-

ciated in the experience of the Christian church with genuine, pervasive, and active piety? To answer this question the investigator will need a mind of rare candor, able to acknowledge true piety where he sees it, and great patience to gather and classify the mass of material that is awaiting him in history and in contemporary life. He must have no prejudices against any people however narrow, crooked, perverse, or superstitious; for from them all, Quaker, Mormon, Romanist, something may be gained, negative when not positive.

(2) What is it in those doctrines which actually elicits and promotes this ascertained piety? Here the demand will be for analytical acumen and psychological knowledge. The incompetent investigator will be confused by conflicting claims. The form of a sacrament or a doctrine of real presence may be declared by some Christian to be the eliciting cause of holy exercises, when in fact it is the entire surrender of himself that he made, which would have been equally effective under any other doctrine or form. If there are true piety and wonderful cures at the shrine of St. Anne de Beaupré, what has the doctrine of saintly intercession to do with it, and what not? Doubtless, as one has said: "You can produce any kind of Christian experience you want"; but what is genuine, and what has produced this? Those two questions in all their unlimited rich-

ness of detail I hand down to you for your laborious solution.

I hope we may also carry away one impression from these lectures, one feeling which shall pervade our lives and especially our ministry, a feeling of rock-like certainty as to the main things of Christian doctrine. Gladstone has given us a great figure of speech which I would employ in impressing my thought, in his title, "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture." There are things that are impregnable. There is a Rock. We discuss much; and often, for the sake of winning puzzled men to clearer views, we concede much. We sometimes say, If there is a God, then so and so. But for ourselves, in the certainty of our own knowledge, there is no such thing as that "if". We know God. We know also Christ in the deepest and most certain experiences of our souls. In respect to such things as these primarily, but truly in respect to all the great main positions of evangelical theology, we know. They are not matters of question for ourselves or for our teaching. There may be an apology in our pulpits in the sense of a defence of the Christian principles against unbelief, but there ought not to be, and, I hope and pray, for us there never shall be the atmosphere of faint-hearted and hesitating apologizing. Let us "speak that we do know", as did our divine Master! And thus

shall the witnessing church in the midst of a hesitating, doubting, despairing world, which has no inward light to receive and interpret the Light that has come into the world, be a messenger of salvation and of certainty.

I appropriate, to express this aspiration the familiar stanza:—

Oh, make thy church, dear Saviour,
A lamp of burnished gold,
To bear before the nations
Thy true light as of old;
Oh, teach thy wandering pilgrims
By this their path to trace,
Till, clouds and darkness ended,
They see thee face to face.

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